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Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

17th Meeting
Tuesday, 4 October 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy ..... (Coté d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Address by Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of the Republic of Haiti

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Haiti.

Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of the Republic of Haiti, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Haiti, His Excellency Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Aristide *(interpretation from French):* It gives me great pleasure to greet all of you here, on behalf of the Haitian people and, with a sense of joy, to address the most heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Amara Essy, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Mr. President, as I wish you every measure of success, I wish to make a point of assuring you of the fullest cooperation of the delegation of Haiti.

To Ambassador Samuel Insanally, I address my compliments for having so masterfully guided the work of the Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

Our congratulations and appreciation also go to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. I thank him with all my heart for the ties of solidarity he has woven with the Haitian people.

To all my dear friends throughout the international community, I address my heartfelt thanks for the support they have given the Haitian people throughout these last three years.

Allow me to address a word of special appreciation to President Bill Clinton, to our special friends the United States, Canada, France, Venezuela, Argentina and to all the States, especially those of the Caribbean Community and common market (CARICOM), that have contributed to the implementation of Security Council resolution 940 (1994) and of the Governors Island Agreement. How happy I am to salute all of you and to thank you *lavalassly*.

In 11 days I shall be in Haiti - at last. Thanks to the heroic courage of the Haitian people and thanks to your solidarity, we will soon be back. Your eyes and our own will contemplate the opening of the flowers of democracy. In eleven days I shall invite you to celebrate this festival of reconciliation, of democracy and of peace at home, in Haiti.

Even now, with the peaceful launching of the operation "Uphold Democracy" on 19 September last, a tropical smile has shed light upon the faces of those who espouse and love peace. Together, President Clinton and

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we have managed to open up a channel of hope after so much suffering.

(spoke in Creole; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)

My hat is off to the Haitian people.
Honour and respect to the 5,000 victims among us.
Father Jean-Marie Vincent died so that Haiti could live.

(spoke in French)

The resistance of the Haitian people has its roots in a historical past where the beacon of liberty has shone day and night. As he was being put on a ship for France, Toussaint Louverture declared quite rightly,

"In overthrowing me, you have only cut down the trunk of the tree of liberty. Its roots will grow back, for they are many and deep."

On the threshold of the bicentennial of our independence, these roots nourish us with the sap of democracy. The Haitian people will never cease in its struggle to guarantee its inalienable and imprescriptible rights to life, liberty and happiness. We will never cease in the struggle to establish a socially just, economically free and politically independent Haitian nation.

Thus, the first black republic of the world, today torn asunder by the *coup d'état* of 30 September 1991, is marching resolutely and definitively towards the establishment of a democratic society.

(spoke in Creole; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)

Through diplomacy
We attain democracy.

(spoke in French)

In the face of this grim tragedy that has meant three years of suffering, thorns of pain pierce our hearts. None the less, our people excels at colouring the landscape with hope.

The brave live in hope
and the cowardly in fear.

Better late than never: "By following the river you reach the sea", said Plautus as long ago as the second century B.C. To this end, despite the democratic structures set up by Solon and Pittacus in the sixth century B.C., it was necessary to wait for Ephialtes, Cleisthenes and Pericles to achieve the democratization of political life in Athens.

(spoke in Creole; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)

Hope gives life.

(spoke in French)

We have no fear of the Haiti of the year 2004.

Despite the dreadful spectacle of the last three years, we march towards the year 2004 with optimism. The path that leads there necessarily passes through the historic crossroads where the elections of 16 December 1990 and our return to Haiti meet.

Eleven days from now I shall be there, thanks to the determination of the Haitian people and to your solidarity. This is a history worthy of attention, and there is no history worthy of attention other than that of free peoples. The history of peoples subjugated to despotism is no more than a collection of anecdotes.

Eleven days from now we shall be there. A brilliant light, that of reconciliation, will dazzle us. Between violence and vengeance, reconciliation steps in. Between impunity and iniquity, justice steps in. In other words, we the President of the Republic of Haiti clearly and firmly say,

Yes to reconciliation!
No to violence!
No to vengeance!
No to impunity!
Yes to justice!

(spoke in Creole; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)

We shall brew a coffee of reconciliation
through the filter of justice
so that no trace of violence, no vengeance
will be found.

(spoke in French)

With reconciliation, all hearts - rich and poor, civilian and soldier - must be embraced by enthusiasm. With reconciliation, our proud eyes must no longer be flooded with tears.

> You, parents and friends of our 5,000 victims,
> you who endure this crushing yoke,
> all of you, rich and poor, soldier and civilian:
> soon a stream of light will flood
> the deepest wells of your heart.
> Surely it is the light of reconciliation.

Otherwise, how can we dispel the gloom of subhuman abjectness? How can we pass from wretchedness to poverty in dignity?

A study of the countries of the third world shows us that 20 per cent of the population in developing countries know hunger every day, 25 per cent are deprived of the essential means of survival, 33 per cent languish in abject poverty. The World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen in 1995, must offer new possibilities for alleviating the distress of more than a billion human beings preyed upon by hunger, disease and utter helplessness.

In Haiti in 1994, 750,000 children attend school; more than 1,250,000 stay at home or work plots of land. Yet our Constitution stipulates that education is a right of all citizens. It is a duty the State cannot shirk. In these circumstances, 10 years from now we will have to attend to 3,000,000 school-aged children, which will mean increasing the number of teachers from 35,000 to 100,000 and the number of schools from 8,000 to 20,000.

On our return we shall undertake a literacy campaign making it possible to attain a significantly low rate of illiteracy: 5 to 10 per cent. Reconciliation among all is of course imperative. Everywhere and always, reconciliation and peace are intertwined.

The dissolution of the Soviet bloc has favoured the opening of a new era after decades of bipolarization. Yet we have the responsibility of protecting peace within our own States. Between 1989 and 1992 there were 82 armed conflicts, only three of which were between States.

In our country, institutionalized violence did not unleash a civil war but, rather, a genocide. Even today, despite the presence of the multinational force, acts of violence against our population continue. The disarming of paramilitary groups, notably FRAPH and its *attachés*, is indispensable if peace is to reign throughout our country.

(spoke in English)

This operation is proceeding to the complete satisfaction of the Haitian people. Obviously, the restoration of democracy will bring reconciliation for all, peace to all of us and respect and justice to every single citizen.

(spoke in Creole; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)

> Lavalas brings a message of peace.
> The guns must fall silent
> if we are to have peace.

(spoke in French)

The professionalization of a 1,500-strong army and the creation of a police force that is separate from the army fall within this peace process. Peace must be protected and guaranteed for the sake of the happiness of all Haitian men and women.

Article 265 of our Constitution stipulates: "The Armed Forces of Haiti are apolitical". Article 264 says "They are set up to guarantee the security and territorial integrity of the Republic".

Article 269-1 says:

> "The Police must ensure the maintenance of public order and the protection of the lives and the property of the citizenry".

It is time to create a stable environment that will make national reconciliation possible in our land. We shall no longer have an army of 7,000 absorbing 40 per cent of the national budget. Globally speaking, military expenditures have declined considerably over the last six years, at an average rate of 3.6 per cent per annum. Why, then, do we have one soldier for every 1,000 Haitians and 1.8 physicians for every 10,000 inhabitants, while the industrial countries average one physician for every 400 inhabitants?

Once back home, we shall set in motion our programme to correct the current health situation where

there are 1,000 physicians for 7 million inhabitants, one nurse for every 2,200 inhabitants, and one hospital bed for every 1,300 inhabitants. Our goal is to care for 8 million Haitians with 2,000 physicians and 8,000 nurses and to increase the number of hospital beds to one for every 400 inhabitants by the year 2004. We will have to open a health centre in every district; we shall then have 52. Each municipal area will have its own dispensary. The measures to be adopted will allow us to reduce the infant mortality rate from 135 to 40 per 1,000. The average life expectancy of our population will rise from 54 to 65 years.

Reconciliation and reconstruction are intimately intertwined:

(spoke in Creole; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)

We shall prepare the coffee of reconciliation in the filter of justice so that we shall no longer find any trace of violence or vengeance.

(spoke in French)

Above and beyond our national boundaries, the tragedies of Rwanda, Burundi and Bosnia-Herzegovina have confronted us day after day. The suffering of one man is the suffering of mankind. Every person represents humanity. Since the end of the Second World War, over 23 million people have been killed in armed conflict. How can one remain indifferent when confronted by the tempests of violence that have scourged so many countries with which we enjoy fraternal ties, such as Liberia, Somalia, Georgia, the Sudan and Armenia, to cite just a few?

Fortunately, certain conflicts have taken a turn towards peace in the course of the last two years. We hail with hope the peace between Israel and Palestine that has begun to emerge in the Middle East, and we likewise salute South Africa, where the first non-racial, free elections have been held.

Neither racial barriers nor barriers of class must exist. On the threshold of the year 2004, the Haitian diaspora - our tenth *Département*, as it were - is our focus par excellence for celebration of the reconciliation between Haitians and Haiti.

(spoke in Creole; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)

Bravo for our tenth *Département*. Haiti is the Haitians' greatest wealth. Haiti always will be our "chez nous", our home. Come back home. We can make our homeland as beautiful as a rainbow.

(spoke in French)

At the present time 17.4 per cent - 740 kilometres - of our roads are paved; the remaining 2,960 kilometres are mud roads. Ten years hence, a network of some 2,500 kilometres of paved roads will link all of our major and secondary cities and towns. Some 3,000 kilometres of local roads will be laid down.

In 1994, only 1.3 per cent of our forest cover remains. At this rate there will be no forests in Haiti by 1998. With the major reforestation drive that we are going to set up, over 6 million trees will be planted each year. By the year 2004, one-third of our territory will be reafforested.

It goes without saying that a climate of political stability will allow us to promote economic growth. In 1991, the economic policy and fiscal discipline adopted by the Lavalas government brought in $500,200,000 in customs revenue, domestic revenue and transfers from public enterprises. It was a historic performance for our country. By the year 2004, at a growth rate of 10 per cent per annum, the same revenue would bring in $1.26 billion.

In monetary terms, the results were just as satisfactory: an increase in foreign exchange reserves of $20 million dollars; a decrease in the devaluation of our *gourde*, the national currency, from 58.8 to 47.6 per cent; inflation reduced from 20 to 12 per cent.

But what remains of these achievements after three years of plunder? The debt ceiling has been raised twice. Inflation is estimated at 60 per cent. Our national currency, the *gourde*, has been devalued by 300 per cent relative to the dollar. Public finances are in bankruptcy and the public treasury has recorded a $100 million loss for the fiscal years 1992-1994.

This is why there is an absolute need for this reconciliation between Haitians and Haiti, which is a *sine qua non* for creating a modern State by rebuilding the economy. We have to open up the economy to attract foreign investment and to provide goods at better prices to Haitian consumers. Synergistic relationships between the private sector and the State are indispensable.

At the level of developing countries, foreign debt has multiplied fifteenfold in two decades. From $100 billion in 1970, it rose to $650 billion in 1980 and to more than $1.5 trillion in 1992. This debt is an enormous brake on the development of third-world countries. In 1992 these countries had to shoulder debt servicing of $160 billion: more than twice the amount of official development assistance. However, one can see signs of a turn around. In Haiti, back home, payments arrears rose to $42 million in September 1993 and will surpass $81 million in December of this year. After I return, $13 million will be freed up as the government's contribution to the reduction of these arrears.

Setting up a State based on the rule of law also implies reconciliation between Haitians and Haitians: citizens of a country where every man and every woman is a human being, equal before the law. The administration of real justice will free us from the vicious circle of violence and vengeance. Today, the people of Haiti have no access to a system of justice. For our 565 municipal areas, there are only 170 courts and 300 attorneys. However, the rule of law remains an indispensable tool for building the kind of world we aspire to by the year 2004. Between now and then, each and every one of our communal areas will have to get its own court. The number of attorneys will double to 600. A reformed judicial system, backed by an independent, national, civilian police force 10,000 strong, will restore confidence to our citizens. Thus, the restoration of democracy will bring about respect and justice for everyone.

In the year 2004, after 10 years of sound democratic management, we shall have achieved a structured civil society where the bread of tolerance will be shared among political parties, the parliament, elected local officials, trade unions, socio-professional organizations, women on the farms, grassroots organizations, religious and ecclesiastical groups and communities - Protestants, Catholics and practitioners of voodoo alike - cooperatives, non-governmental organizations, and so forth.

On the threshold of the third millennium, the principle of "One man, one vote" can only accelerate the form and movement of democracy globally. From one-half to three-quarters of the world's population lives under relatively pluralistic and democratic systems of government. In 1993, elections were organized in 45 different countries, sometimes for the very first time.

In Haiti in 2004, we shall already have held four municipal elections, six legislative elections and three presidential ones. Public administration will already have been strengthened by the modernization of ministries and public institutions. Political life will be more active at the local level because most of the major decisions will be taken at the level of the 565 municipal areas and the 135 municipalities.

Mr. President, distinguished diplomats and dear friends in the international community, thanks to your support and the determination of the Haitian people, we shall soon see that brighter tomorrow.

Created to spare the world from the scourge of a new world war, the United Nations has, over the years, seen its role expand and its responsibilities take on ever increasing importance in a totally changed international setting. As we gather here for this forty-ninth session, on the eve of the commemoration of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary, I would voice the hope that the Organization may always respond effectively to the new challenges the world will proffer.

To the people of Haiti, the children of Haiti, the source of our pride and our dignity, I say "To save our beloved Haiti, let us all be united beneath that spreading palm, topped with the crown of freedom, the shadow of whose fronds protects those words inscribed in golden letters: 'Unity is strength.'"

Our universe is expanding. The hundred billion galaxies of which it is composed are speeding farther and farther apart while we Haitians, men and women, are moving closer and closer together. Our slogan is: "Reconciliation of one and all and justice for all."

In its elliptical orbit around the Sun the Earth moves at 30 kilometres a second. May the land of Haiti revolve around the sun of justice at like speed.

We are all present at this rendezvous of reconciliation, setting forth together towards the year 2004, the bicentenary of our independence. I say:

(spoke in Creole; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)

> "Spread the word among you, without violence or vengeance. Let us triumph through gentle democracy. I count on you, and you can count on me. For now, farewell - soon we will meet again.

"Alone, we are weak. Together, we are strong. United we are Lavalas."

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Haiti for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of the Republic of Haiti, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9 ***(continued)***

General Debate

Address by Mr. Carlos Alberto Wahnon de Carvalho Veiga, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cape Verde

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cape Verde.

Mr. Carlos Alberto Wahnon de Carvalho Veiga, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cape Verde, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cape Verde, His Excellency Mr. Carlos Alberto Wahnon de Carvalho Veiga, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Veiga (Cape Verde) *(spoke in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation):* Mr. President, we welcome with great satisfaction your election to preside over the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly in the certainty that your qualities as an outstanding and experienced diplomat, in addition to your well-known personal dedication, will guarantee that our work is fruitful and effective. Through you, your country and all of Africa will have the well-deserved opportunity to contribute to the deliberations that lie before us.

We should like to express our gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Insanally, for the able manner and constructive spirit in which he guided the forty-eighth session.

We should also like to express to the Secretary-General our appreciation for the far-sightedness with which he is performing the task of guiding the United Nations in the new era into which it has entered.

In recent years there has been broad agreement that the great events that have shaken the world, giving rise to great hopes of human progress, have led to different and in many respects contradictory changes and prospects, and that there has been a delay in forging a genuine consensus among nations.

Democracy as a way of life has been established in a large number of countries in every geographical area and is developing with obvious dynamism. We hope for a kind of rebirth, inspired by an ever-greater participation in the whole social fabric of national life. In this framework, the civic aspect is coming to the fore and taking on increasing vigour.

Long deemed indispensable to economic progress, private enterprise has seen its role considerably increased in many developing countries.

Unquestionably, there is an increased general awareness of the environment throughout the world, and the idea that the value of the planet's resources must endure as a condition of our very survival is gradually becoming a guide and a criterion for human activities. International action to combat violations of human rights in all forms and to encourage the exercise of those rights has become a constant, despite the distance separating us from the attainment of our desired objectives. The rejection of the social inequality of women is gaining ground, and we shall from now on be discussing the way this is reflected in practice.

Those are the salient factors, in addition to others of equal importance, that are among the positive trends which are at our disposal and which must be developed at all costs so that we can derive the full benefit of their great potential.

However, in the two major areas that constitute yardsticks for assessing mankind's well-being - those of peace and development - the present situation is far from satisfactory. Conflicts continue to proliferate, and positive settlements have been achieved to very few of them. Situations of poverty have assumed vast proportions and even critical levels in several regions, particularly in Africa. The persistence of these evils in the post-cold-war era reminds us that the community of nations still lacks a direction that might lead it towards the fulfilment of its own concept of genuine community.

There has been a lack of vision to recognize the true scope of collective interests and the political will and ability to implement them. There has also been a lack of cooperation and tolerance as independent values untouched by the systematic quest for the upper hand.

Peace and development are closely linked. Moreover, we are convinced that the most complex challenge concerns development and that the most decisive influences on the relationship arise from that challenge. Indeed, collective security hinges on shared progress - shared within a framework that provides justice and equality. It is a fact that during periods of expanded economic growth the most visible effects of imbalance have, for better or for worse, been attenuated. However, the development to which we aspire cannot be limited by narrow so-called realism. Equality as an inherent element of progress cannot be described as an ideal today. It is, rather, a prerequisite.

The United Nations shouldered a very specific responsibility and role when, in its Charter, it solemnly committed itself to working towards a better world. The United Nations is a unique body and its indispensability in serving the interests of all is becoming ever clearer today. It is indeed in this universal forum that there is a need jointly to establish guidelines for the entire world, that the random developments we experience converge, and that mechanisms and measures commensurate with today's issues are promoted.

In order to increase its ability to carry out its mission in the present context, the United Nations has decided to reform its structure to make it more effective and stronger and to ensure greater participation: Under the dynamic and tireless coordination of the Secretary-General, the process is under way and we hope that at the present session of the Assembly new and fruitful progress will be achieved allowing the Organization further to promote economic and social development, prevent conflicts and eliminate their causes. In this regard, the Assembly will continue to make use of the guidelines set down in its "Agenda for Peace" and will have the opportunity to evaluate the report containing the draft of an Agenda for Development.

The strengthening of the legitimacy and authority of the United Nations will remain linked to an improvement of its democratic representativeness and to better regional balance, as well as to safeguarding the identity of all, including that of smaller States. In this context, Africa has recently formulated its current position on the reform of the Organization. This reform must provide genuine political and operational consistency to all the bodies and structures of the system, within whose framework the African continent must have an appropriately expanded representation.

In the meantime, the question of the expansion of the Security Council has been answered by some States with expressions of their readiness to assume increased responsibilities within it. As to the diversification of regional representation, we note with satisfaction and welcome with great fellow-feeling the announced candidacy of a Portuguese-speaking country, Brazil.

Since the opening last year of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, several important political events have taken place in the world. We were particularly struck by the magnificent example of maturity and vision offered by the people of South Africa and its leaders, particularly President Mandela. We wish to share with them the pride of all Africa and the admiration of the international community.

Unfortunately, the lessons to be derived from this example have not yet been put into practice in some cases in our region. Recent events in Rwanda, which have brought such great pain to its people and especially its children, are a tragedy which our conscience demands never be repeated on our continent. Moreover, hostilities continue that could and should have been over by now, while opportunities for peace and reconciliation have been missed again and again, in particular in Liberia. The agreements already concluded among the Liberians must now be implemented and an end must be put once and for all to armed clashes and their repercussions on neighbouring countries and the West African region.

The conflict that has so long afflicted Angola has passed through a stage of incredibly destructive, deadly violence following the failure peacefully to implement the results of the elections of September 1991, even though those elections were supervised and declared free and fair by the United Nations. We very much hope that the present stage of negotiations between the Government of Angola and UNITA will finally herald a cessation of hostilities in the near future and the opening of an era of peace, reconstruction and progress so long awaited by a people with which Cape Verdeans feel such brotherly solidarity.

The coming elections in Mozambique will doubtless close an era in which national interests have prevailed, but also in which the United Nations and the international community have rendered praiseworthy assistance. We

wish Mozambique all success in these elections, during which Cape Verde will be present as part of an observer team from the United Nations Operation in Mozambique. It is essential that the parties continue rigourously to observe the rules of the democratic game by unequivocally accepting the outcome of the elections once these have been declared free and fair by the international community.

We are gratified by the way in which the recent first legislative and presidential elections in Guinea-Bissau took place and by the peaceful respect shown for its results. This attests to the sense of responsibility of the political leaders of the country.

In Sao Tome and Principe, the established democratic system was reaffirmed by the calm that prevailed during the electoral process that was completed at the end of last week.

We also wish to declare our support and encouragement for the continuation of the talks which are taking place under the auspices of the Secretary-General between Portugal, Indonesia and representatives of East Timor. We hope that they are taking place on the basis of forms of participation that respect the fundamental rights of the citizens of East Timor.

As regards the maintenance of peace, it must be recognized that in recent times notable progress has been made on the international level, in the United Nations in particular. The improvement of this capability must continue, and this will require even greater cooperation and complementarity with the regional organizations. Africa is showing what it can do in this area, but obstacles to maximizing this potential remain in the form of gaps that must be filled through more consistent, predictable and timely support by the United Nations and the partner countries.

The prevention of conflicts remains, in any case, the primary objective to be sought. The action to be taken to this effect finds its reference points in the recommendations in "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277). However, the ultimate success of prevention will continue to depend on the longer-term task of eliminating the deeper causes of the conflicts, which, of course, are many. In addition, it will be crucial to tackle them simultaneously, not only to produce synergy but also so that the relevant lessons can be learned concerning these causes and the relations between them.

One of the major causes of the instability that generates conflict is poverty, to which we referred earlier. That in itself would be sufficient to lend urgency to the eradication of poverty. However, the scope and nature of the phenomenon require of us a reaction based on the moral aspects of the heritage of mankind.

Today, it is understood that all peoples must live in dignity; that is their basic human right, and we must guarantee them the realization of that right. This need must transcend the present stage of mere words, and a programme must be implemented to transform the situation. A particularly valuable contribution to this is in the works: the World Summit for Social Development, for which preparations are now under way. Within this framework, there will be a need to analyse the development of the human being in society, and not just some reduced concept of the social element as an objective. We still have enough time, and it is our duty to muster the necessary will to achieve the goals set for this important Summit.

The fact that for countless individuals it is impossible to benefit from contemporary parameters of well-being has resulted in the major migrations of our era, which reveal the critical imbalances which continue in certain regions of the world. The solution can, clearly, come only from development and from the rejection of scenarios in which some parts of the world or groups of people are excluded or marginalized. In the meantime, we emphasize the need to see implemented the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development concerning refugees, displaced persons and migrants, a timely instrument which has been made available to us.

Within the framework of global development one of the major questions that arises is that of Africa. This question must continue to be given very high priority on the international agenda and on the agenda of the United Nations. The seriousness of the situation prevailing on our continent, the longstanding nature of the problem and the observation of indicators for future prospects deserve to be met as a particularly complex challenge and should never be considered as a pretext for showing lassitude or indifference. The lack of progress in Africa would be a set-back for all, not just for the Africans. We are convinced that this fact will become increasingly clear to us.

In the 1990s in particular, Africa undertook, in rather difficult conditions, reforms and economic adjustments as well as political and managerial transformations. The African achievement certainly has not yet reached its optimal goal, but it must be said that on many occasions it was not adequately supported by external measures and resources, which are, after all, indispensable complements.

The African economic and political systems doubtless still have a long way to go, and they must become more effective and be based on the participation of all. African regional cooperation must increase its pace and must obtain increased benefits. However, the continent must be the beneficiary of, *inter alia*, a major reduction in its debt burden, the elimination of obstacles to its exports, vigorous foreign investments and increasing international assistance better adapted to national policies.

Referring again to the constraints that are affecting Africa in particular, we reiterate the need to mobilize adequate and sufficient resources to allow for the implementation of the International Convention to Combat Desertification, in particular concerning the Sudan and Sahel region and in cooperation with the Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel. For Cape Verde, which is coordinating the activities of this Committee, it is particularly important that this event be crowned with success.

Next year, as we approach the end of the twentieth century, we shall be marking the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization. There are numerous reasons to celebrate this event, especially if we were to try to imagine what the world would be like without the United Nations. My country cannot forget the role which the Organization played in its political emancipation and in its development efforts following that emancipation, nor do we forget that it offers a forum in which small countries can have their say and participate in the deliberations. We welcome in this context the holding of the United Nations Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and we hope that the results of the Conference will be fully implemented.

The time has come to consolidate the feeling of a shared destiny among the diverse nations that are today gathered together within the Organization. We must no longer put off the task of setting out on those recharted paths which our aspirations require.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cape Verde for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Carlos Alberto Wahnon de Carvalho Veiga, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cape Verde, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan, His Excellency Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov.

Mr. Kamilov (Uzbekistan) *(interpretation from Russian):* Allow me to join preceding speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as President of the current session of the United Nations General Assembly.

I should also like to pay a tribute to His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally for his successful leadership as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, I should like to express our gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and I should like to thank him for his substantive contribution to enhancing the authority of the United Nations and his efforts with a view to the maintenance of peace in various regions of the planet.

For me, it is a great honour to address the Assembly today from this lofty rostrum on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Just recently, Uzbekistan marked the third anniversary of the proclamation of its independence. During this time, our country has undertaken significant efforts to strengthen the sovereignty of the States based on the principles of democracy and to set up a free market structure.

Profound economic and political transformations are taking place in the Republic with a view to the formation of a socially oriented market economy.

Today, a process of reform in Uzbekistan has reached a new qualitative level. The Parliament and the Government have adopted a number of significant and fundamental laws and decrees which are now opening the way to developing entrepreneurship and privatization. New legislation guarantees the protection of private property. A number of legislative and economic

incentives for potential foreign investors have been provided, and an extremely favourable environment has been created for their activities in the Republic's markets. For example, all limitations on the importation and exportation of foreign investments have been lifted. Customs duties for goods imported into Uzbekistan have also been cancelled. Joint ventures are exempt from taxes for five years.

The process of privatization of State property is under way in the Republic. Commodity, currency and stock exchanges, as well as real estate markets, are being set up.

The most important process of introducing the national currency was recently completed in Uzbekistan. Implementation of the measures jointly agreed upon with the International Monetary Fund will make it possible to have a firm fiscal policy and will strengthen the national currency.

Perhaps there is no country in the world that has sufficient experience to extend ready advice on how to change social and economic structures smoothly. The complicated and very often controversial processes of the transition to democracy and a market economy are being carried out mainly on an empirical basis, and sometimes in a highly contradictory situation.

An extremely complicated task for the people of Uzbekistan is the perception of the basic principles of democracy and the socially oriented market economy, while at the same time preserving the development of its own rich history and unique culture and traditions. This is assuming today a decisive significance in the successful realization of the task of renewing our society and in the construction of an independent State.

The steps the Government of Uzbekistan has been undertaking in order to reshape the political structure of the State have one more important aspect. They are not a goal in themselves; they are aimed at establishing conditions of social justice. In fact, in many countries, social justice has already long been recognized as a fundamental principle of social life. In essence, if we look at the future in the long term, without justice there cannot be any kind of stability, peace or security. There cannot be any social development, any freedom for the individual, human dignity or an acceptable quality of life for all.

The Constitution of Uzbekistan grants to all citizens of the Republic basic rights and freedoms and provides for their equality before the law without distinction as to sex, race, nationality, language, religion, social standing, or personal beliefs.

The number of political parties and social movements which are operating on the basis of the laws and decrees that have been adopted and incorporated into the political system is gradually increasing. They will be taking part in the parliamentary elections which will be held in Uzbekistan in December 1994 on a multi-party basis.

Speaking about political processes, I should like to touch upon the issue of human rights. First of all, allow me to point out that the modern concept of the basic rights and freedoms of individuals was formed mainly on the basis of a Western system of values and elaborated over a long period of time, under specific cultural and social conditions, and developed as part and parcel of economic growth and better standards of living in Western countries. This experience is hardly one that could be mechanically transferred to other countries.

We do believe, however, that universally accepted human rights concepts should be adapted to the national, religious and historical characteristics of different countries. International practice has in many cases demonstrated that unless society has reached a sufficient level of maturity and sustains it, it will be compelled to a certain extent to constrain the freedom of the individual for the sake of the preservation of the constitutional order.

Today we live in a multidimensional world. Each nation is eager to establish its own political, social and cultural systems on the basis of respect for the national sovereignty of other States and the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs. Therefore, we consider the question of human rights in close connection with that of the need to guarantee to the country stability and peace as the primary conditions for democratic development.

I hope that the recent seminar of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) on general issues, held in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, provided an opportunity to the international observers and its participants to see the gradual evolution of our society towards democracy. At the same time, the seminar has deepened our knowledge on possible ways to make progress in the field of human rights.

Unfortunately, the end of the confrontation between two social and political systems, which reached its peak in the military sphere, has not brought about universal peace. The threat of global thermonuclear war has been reduced. Yet the world has encountered the emergence of several regional military conflicts. In this regard, I would like to make known Uzbekistan's position on the situations in Afghanistan and Tajikistan.

First of all, we consider that settlement of these conflicts is solely the internal affair of Afghanistan and Tajikistan. At the same time, one should keep in mind the fact that these States are the geographical neighbours of Uzbekistan and that there is a potential danger of the regional escalation of these conflicts. That is why we view the situation in these countries with great concern and we are interested in the earliest possible settlement of these conflicts by political and diplomatic means.

I should particularly like to emphasize that today this region is becoming a dangerous zone of open production of and trade in drugs and weapons. These conflicts are exacerbated by the fact that certain forces are secretly seeking to maintain tension in order to strengthen and expand their influence by making use of various religious and nationalist slogans. Moreover, there are some influential groups of drug and weapon dealers interested in continuing the military confrontation for the sake of the preservation of their illegal profits.

In general, crises of this nature have revealed the inadequacy of the existing instruments to settle them through traditional means, given the new security demands of the post-cold-war era.

In this context, Uzbekistan welcomes any initiative by individual countries or groups of countries, as well as by the United Nations, aimed at settling the conflicts. The new possibilities of the United Nations could expand the spectrum of military-political measures for stabilizing situations in such explosive regions, including within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). At the same time, taking into consideration the importance of ensuring the sovereignty of countries that have recently achieved independence and embarked on their own path of development, we believe it would be expedient to have recourse to such measures, with the agreement of Governments interested in such United Nations assistance or with the agreement of the parties to the dispute to a mediating role by the United Nations.

For its part, Uzbekistan has been taking steps to improve the situation in the region. At the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, President Karimov of Uzbekistan proposed the convening in Tashkent of a standing seminar on security issues under the auspices of the United Nations. Today, plans for this idea are becoming clearer. About 15 States have already expressed their interest in participating in the seminar. We hope that in the near future the first seminar of this kind will take place. We are ready to welcome its participants to the ancient and peaceful land of Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan is also proposing for consideration at one of the forthcoming meetings of the Security Council the question of imposing an embargo on the sale of weapons and ammunition in zones of regional conflict.

I should like to take this opportunity to note that there are certain groups in some countries which are intentionally spreading false information about ostensible interference by Uzbekistan in the internal affairs of Afghanistan by taking sides with one of the conflicting parties. In fact, the only support Uzbekistan is rendering to this neighbouring country is humanitarian aid for its suffering people, as requested by the Government of Afghanistan, as well as to Tajik refugees who fled to Afghanistan. This assistance is extended through the representation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the City of Termez.

I should like to pay tribute to the active role the United Nations and the CSCE are taking in this process through their special envoys. We also highly appreciate the productive activities of the regional representation of the United Nations in Uzbekistan.

I should now like to touch upon one more problem which is a threat for many countries - illegal drug-trafficking. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, on the basis of the laws of Uzbekistan and according to Conventions of the United Nations of 1961, 1971 and 1988, preventive measures to cut off illegal activities related to the drug trade are now being undertaken.

In general, narcotics come to Uzbekistan through neighbouring countries, where, owing to unstable political situations, control over the drugs business has been weakened. Moreover, most of these narcotics are in transit to European countries.

In 1993 more than 14 tons of narcotics, with a value of more than $600 million, were seized from criminals in Uzbekistan and were destroyed. The majority of these were intended for sale in Russia and in European countries. In this connection, we call for the imposition of effective measures to prevent the illegal trafficking in drugs and to coordinate international efforts. An example of the successful cooperation between law-enforcement institutions is the Agreement signed in 1992 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan and its counterparts in Russia, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Belarus and Ukraine.

Since October 1993 the Republic has been maintaining close cooperation with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. The visit of the Deputy Executive Director of this United Nations Programme, Mr. Georgio Giacomelli, to Uzbekistan was an important event in the development of cooperation on this issue. A document defining a long-term programme of collaboration against narcotics was signed during the course of that visit.

I should like especially to draw attention to the important role that regional representatives involved in the United Nations Programme have been playing in the coordination of international efforts to solve this global problem. This process was begun in Tashkent at the invitation of the President of Uzbekistan.

We shall do our utmost to cooperate with all interested countries and organizations to bring the narco-business to an end.

I must not miss this opportunity to refer briefly to environmental issues. We are grateful to the United Nations and to the specialized agencies concerned with environmental control and with the prevention of global ecological disasters. We are ready to provide all possible assistance in this noble task.

Central Asia, like many other regions of the world, has experienced ecological disasters of global dimensions. I refer, first and foremost, to the tragedy of the Aral Sea. Over a period of several years the volume of water has dropped more than three times, the area has diminished two times; and the shoreline has receded 80 kilometres. Owing to these factors the desert has eaten up more than 2 million hectares of arable land. The dust-storm radius has increased by more than 300 kilometres. These developments have had a negative effect on the sanitary situation in the region. It is the opinion of United Nations experts that, in terms of ecological and socio-economic implications, the Aral Sea tragedy is one of the greatest disasters of the twentieth century.

The death of the Aral Sea, which is possible, could have unpredictable consequences for the whole world. This is why we are appealing to the international community to help to save the Aral Sea and the Aral region.

One possible means of solving this global problem is the creation of an international commission of experts under the auspices of the United Nations, which would initiate projects and make recommendations. The Government of Uzbekistan, for its part, would provide all possible support for the activities of the commission.

The profound changes that have taken place in the world over the past half century require adaptation to new realities. There are now about 200 States, and the roles of many countries have changed. Some now have the right to be regarded as great Powers. Huge economic unions are being formed by States. Regional and global cooperation is an increasing trend. Because of the need for effective management of the processes of economic integration Governments are voluntarily transferring some of their sovereign rights to newly created joint political institutions. On the other hand, these trends underline the fact that a State should be recognized as a sovereign member of the world community so that such cooperation may be possible.

The time is now ripe for the full realization of the fundamental principles of the United Nations, which were set down when the Organization was founded nearly 50 years ago. The United Nations procedures must be rejected; these procedures came into being largely under the influence of the spirit - which until recently had prevailed within these walls - of the cumbersome, often ineffective and over-bureaucratic confrontation between the United States and the USSR.

The necessary reforms are already producing results. I refer in particular to the recent decision to establish the Office of Internal Oversight Services. As an Under-Secretary-General, the head of this Office will be able to initiate a more substantial discussion on the impending phases of reform of the Organization.

There is no doubt that the evolution of the Security Council is still the most important and most complicated issue. How are we to reconcile the need to increase the number of permanent members, so that they are

representative of all the regions of the world, with the need to make the Council more effective towards the solution of urgent international problems?

How can the desire to reduce the level of bureaucracy in the United Nations be reconciled with the efforts to increase the number of permanent members of the Security Council? And will the exercise of the right of veto remain predominant, or should consensus become the main means of adopting decisions?

These and many other issues are multidimensional and complex. They affect the interests of many countries, which often have quite different points of view, both in terms of the internal procedures of the United Nations and in terms of the means of settling international problems. It is obvious that this process will be difficult and time-consuming. We have no doubt that, ultimately, the question of increased membership of the Security Council should be considered in the context of the principle of rotation. Countries that now have the necessary capacity and sense of responsibility in respect of the maintenance of peace and security throughout the world, and at the same time are representative of the various regions of the world, should become additional permanent members of the Security Council.

Our country bases its foreign policy on the realities of the contemporary world. It aims for integration with the world community through equal partnership with all other countries. Of course, our current capabilities are limited, for a number of understandable reasons. None the less, we are ready to contribute whatever is necessary for the resolution of global problems. We are eager to cooperate with countries that are interested, and we are prepared to do so both at the bilateral level and within the framework of the United Nations. We believe that the greater the number of parties involved in the discussion of international problems and of the question of increasing the effectiveness of the international institutions, the more fruitful will be the outcome. Harmonization of the rights of individuals, nations and people, together with a common interest in securing peace and development in the world, should become the main tool for resolving problems.

The President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, His Royal Highness Prince Saud Al-Faisal.

Prince Saud Al-Faisal (Saudia Arabia) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It is with pleasure that I begin this speech by conveying to you, Sir, our most sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Your election not only reflects the trust placed in you personally but also bespeaks the regard of the international community for your country, Côte d'Ivoire. We wish you success in the pursuit of your mission.

I take this opportunity to congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Samuel Insanally, on the effective manner in which he conducted the affairs of the General Assembly at its last session.

I also wish to note the sincere efforts by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to consolidate peace and to reduce the tensions that beset many parts of the world.

It is with great pleasure, Sir, that I convey to you the best wishes of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, and his hope that at this session the General Assembly will successfully deal with international developments, benefitting from the opportunities provided by the principles and other foundations upon which contemporary international relations rest.

The Government of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques has always been willing to play a positive role in the international arena, and to contribute to achieving our common goals of security, stability and prosperity. The principles and other foundations of our present international order derive their legitimacy and strength from the tenets of the United Nations Charter, which are inherent in international legality. The most important of these principles are: respect for the sovereignty and independence of nations; the inviolability of international borders; the establishment of justice and equality between nations; rejection of the use of force in the settlement of conflicts; safeguarding human dignity; and ensuring security and prosperity for all mankind. Based on its adherence to Islamic *shari'a*, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is committed to the principles of the United Nations Charter, and has endeavoured throughout the Organization's history to implement those principles in practice.

The Gulf Cooperation Council, whose current session my country has the honour of chairing, bases itself on the principles of the United Nations Charter. We are convinced that the international community's success in serving the cause of international peace and security will depend on the commitment by its members

to the United Nations Charter and on the strength of their political will to apply the resolutions of international legality.

While the firm unified international stand in confronting Iraq's aggression against the State of Kuwait in 1990 was vindicated when the aggression was reversed and international legality was restored, the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains unresolved. Serb aggression against the Bosnian people continues. This is because the aggression has not been dealt with in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the principles of international legality. It is incumbent upon this Organization, and in particular the Security Council, to move swiftly and effectively to demonstrate that aggression is bound to fail, whether in Kuwait, in Bosnia or in any other part of the world.

Even a cursory glance at the current international situation would be sufficient to highlight the need for an effective United Nations role and for implementation of the Charter in order to deal with the chronic hotbeds of tension that are widespread and that continue to threaten security and stability in many parts of the world. This requires us to strengthen further the role of the United Nations as an effective vehicle for creating the proper conditions for world peace and stability.

We in the Gulf Cooperation Council recognize the prominent role played by the Secretary-General in fashioning a new approach for the United Nations based on the principles of the United Nations Charter and the norms of international legality. We welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals in his "An Agenda for Peace", and we look forward to his agenda for development. The ideas contained in those two reports are bound to make an important contribution to the efforts of the General Assembly to enhance the role and effectiveness of the United Nations. Success in achieving this aim will rely to a great extent on the degree of support by Member States for the principles and principles of the United Nations. The most important of these are: the maintenance of international peace and security; peacemaking through the deterrence of aggression; the elimination of threats to the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations; and the promotion of cooperation in the service of international development.

Under the United Nations Charter, the Security Council, the body most directly concerned with the maintenance of international peace and security, has the primary responsibility for dealing with international problems. As we pursue reform of United Nations organs, it is therefore crucial that the Council be made more capable and better equipped to carry out its mandate under the Charter.

The Gulf Cooperation Council attaches great importance to a number of regional and international issues. We greatly appreciated the important role played by the United Nations following the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. That role clearly reflected the international community's expectations regarding the responsibilities of the United Nations. It also highlighted the ability of the Security Council to confront aggression and reverse its effects. We hope that this solidarity will help guarantee that no repetition of this aggression can occur. This can be achieved only through complete and total implementation of all Security Council resolutions on the matter. The Iraqi Government continues to defy international legality and to attempt to deceive international public opinion through limited implementation of some of the requirements of Security Council resolutions 661 (1990) and 687 (1991) pertaining to the issue of weapons of mass destruction. The true objective of these Iraqi efforts is to circumvent Security Council resolutions, which contain a number of requirements accepted by the Iraqi Government and which together form an interrelated legal structure. In its last review of the sanctions imposed on Iraq, the Security Council decided to continue the application of those sanctions; this demonstrates that the efforts of the Iraqi Government to deceive the world community have not borne fruit.

Iraq has yet to meet the essence of its obligations, which lies in full and irrevocable recognition of the State of Kuwait and of its borders. To do this it must officially accept Security Council resolution 833 (1993), which demarcated the international borders between Kuwait and Iraq and provided international guarantees for those borders under the cease-fire agreements set out in Security Council resolution 687 (1991), which was accepted by the Iraqi Government. And in view of the fact that the Iraqi Government has repeatedly violated its international and legal obligations, we feel it is necessary to insist that Iraq's recognition of Kuwait and its borders should be irrevocably stated, in conformity with the constitutional measures applied in Iraq and based on the international guarantees contained in the United Nations Security Council resolution 833 (1993). Furthermore, Iraq must comply with its commitment to release all Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti prisoners and detainees. While we welcome Iraq's participation on the committee dealing

with prisoners and detainees, we hope that its participation is a genuine attempt to settle this humanitarian issue and not merely a symbolic move to appease international public opinion.

The Government of Iraq is also expected to pay full compensation for all the damage caused by its aggression. It must refrain from committing or sponsoring any acts of terrorism or subversion. All of the above requirements represent a series of interrelated international legal obligations, that must be complied with in their entirety.

The States of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), while reiterating their commitment to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, wish to voice their concern over the continuing suffering of the Iraqi people, the sole responsibility for which lies with the Iraqi Government which rejects the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991) which deal with the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people.

The GCC States have actively participated in the Middle East peace process since its inception at the Madrid Peace Conference. The GCC States contributed to advancing the bilateral talks between the Arab States and Israel. They have also participated effectively in the multilateral talks. The Arab delegations' commitment to and participation in this process gave a clear indication of their sincere intention to work towards a just and comprehensive peace in the region. The multilateral talks are an integral part of the peace process launched in Madrid and complement the bilateral talks and not a substitute thereto.

The signing of the Declaration of Principles between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Israeli Government in Washington in 1993, raised hopeful expectations, since it represented the first step towards the achievement of a just and permanent settlement of the Palestinian problem. While the Gulf Cooperation Council notes with satisfaction the concrete progress made on the Palestinian-Israeli track and the important steps taken to expand Palestinian self-rule and to transfer institutions to the Palestinian National Authority, it calls upon the international community, and in particular on the co-sponsors of the peace process, the United States of America and the Russian Federation, to ensure that Israel places no more obstacles in the path of the Palestinian National Authority as it assumes its responsibilities.

While we welcome the progress achieved on the Jordanian-Israeli track, we wish to voice our deep concern over the lack of clear progress in the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. The issue of the occupied Golan Heights is clear and governed by the principles of respect for international borders. Security is not attained by the occupation of another nation's territory by force, but through the establishment of peace, which can only be realized in this situation by the total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Golan Heights. The Lebanese-Israeli track is governed by United Nations Security Council resolution 425 (1978), which clearly calls for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Lebanese territory. We call for the complete and unconditional implementation of the said resolution.

The question of Al-Quds Al-Shareef is at the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and permanent peace cannot be achieved in the Middle East without a just settlement of this issue. The settlement must take into account the resolutions of international legality, and in particular United Nations Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which calls for Israeli withdrawal from all territories occupied in 1967, and United Nations Security Council resolution 252 (1968) regarding Al-Quds Al-Shareef. Israel is thus required to refrain from taking any measures that would demographically change the status of the city of Al-Quds or prejudice future negotiations pertaining to its final status. Any permanent and comprehensive settlement must also address the issue of the return of Palestinian refugees and the issue of settlements erected by Israel in the occupied territories in violation of international law and the Geneva conventions.

Concrete progress on the various bilateral tracks on the various aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict is bound to lead inevitably to similar progress with regard to the issues addressed in the multilateral talks and lay the groundwork for a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the Middle East.

We in the GCC are convinced that the success of the Palestinian National Authority in implementing the Declaration of Principles depends on the support it receives from the Palestinian people, as well as on the political and economic support it receives from the international community. It was on the basis of this conviction that the GCC States participated in the international donors conference held in Washington, D.C. in October of 1993 and pledged substantial financial assistance. The Gulf Cooperation Council States have also contributed financially to the establishment of a Palestinian police force and administration to enable it to

assume its duties. We have also announced, along with our Arab brethren at the 102nd session of the League of Arab States, our full support for the Palestinian self-governing authority.

In the context of their pursuit to help the Middle East region enjoy its legitimate share of security, peace and stability, the GCC States have focused great attention on efforts to rid the region of all weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear, chemical or biological. To achieve this objective, we call on all countries in the region, including Israel, to refrain from producing, possessing or stockpiling any such weapons.

The GCC States note with great concern the continued occupation of the three United Arab Emirates islands - Abu Moussa, the Greater and Lesser Tumbs - by the Islamic Republic of Iran. The GCC States, motivated by a desire to have the best possible ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran, have repeatedly urged the Islamic Republic of Iran to respond to the call of the United Arab Emirates to settle this problem by peaceful means through serious bilateral negotiations.

The Government of Iran, however, has not responded to these calls so far. We therefore call for referring this matter to the International Court of Justice, which is responsible for settling disputes among nations.

The current session of the General Assembly is taking place at a time when the plight of the Bosnian people is worsening as a result of the war of extermination and ethnic cleansing waged by the Serbian forces with the support of Serbia and Montenegro. In spite of the optimism generated by the Muslim-Croat agreement to establish a federation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and their acceptance of the peace plan proposed by the international Contact Group, and welcomed by all of us the Serbian forces continue to challenge the international peace-keeping forces of the United Nations, in total disregard of United Nations resolutions. In so doing, the Serbian forces have been emboldened by the inability of the international community, and in particular the States of the European Community which have a special responsibility *vis-à-vis* this tragedy, to implement the necessary sanctions and impose the required punishment, to stop the Serb aggression. The Serb forces have rejected the proposed peace plan and escalated their attacks against Bosnia and Herzegovina, which makes it patently clear that their intention is to undermine all the peaceful efforts undertaken by the United Nations.

We listened with keen interest to the speech by President Alija Izetbegovic, which gave a graphic description of the dangerous situation in his country. In the light of this we are concerned that the hasty adoption by the United Nations Security Council of its resolution 943 (1994), which provides for relaxing the United Nations sanctions imposed on Serbia and Montenegro, could preclude a just settlement and lead to rewarding the aggression. It is incumbent upon the international community, and the Security Council in particular, to take the necessary action to remedy this tragic situation. This action must include declaring the entirety of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina a safe haven, and providing for the deployment of international observers equipped with a clear mandate, and sufficiently credible powers, in these safe havens and along the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They should also include the recognition of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Serbia and Montenegro before any consideration is given to the gradual lifting of the sanctions imposed on them. United Nations forces must also protect the areas of safe haven and provide for their defence. The failure of the United Nations to provide the required protection for the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina makes it necessary to lift the arms embargo so as to allow it to exercise its legitimate right to self-defence as enshrined in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

Somalia continues to be in the grip of a situation of instability and political chaos coupled with acts of violence and bloodshed. In spite of all the efforts deployed to extricate this nation from its plight, instability and lack of security still plague this troubled land. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which has tried on a number of occasions to contain the conflict in Somalia, to bring about national reconciliation between the various factions and which has provided humanitarian assistance and relief to the fraternal Somali people, calls upon all factions to listen to the voice of reason and logic, to put the interests of the Somali people above all else and to work towards national reconciliation.

The feelings of optimism and jubilation triggered by the victory of the Mujahideen in Afghanistan and the restoration of that country's independence and identity are now overshadowed by feelings of disappointment and bitterness as a result of the continued infighting between the various Mujahideen factions. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has endeavoured, under the direction and guidance of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd bin Abdulaziz, to put an end to the fratricide among our Afghani brethren. These efforts were crowned when all

factions were assembled in 1993 at the House of God in Makkah, and an agreement was signed to restore unity, security and stability to the nation of Afghanistan. We continue to urge all factions of the Afghani Mujahideen immediately to put an end to the infighting by complying with the "Makkah Agreement" in letter and in spirit, so as to move in the direction of reconstruction and development and, thereby, to enable their nation to resume its proper place in the international community.

The conflict over Jamu-Kashmir continues to cast its shadow over relations between the two neighbours, India and Pakistan, and represents one of the elements of instability in this part of the world. My Government continues to watch with concern the bloodshed there. We wish to voice the view that there is a need for a solution to this chronic problem. It has become clear that violence against the Kashmiri people, and the use of military force will achieve nothing but the further deterioration of the situation in Kashmir. It will also feed the flames of instability in the region. A peaceful solution to this problem lies in the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions and in dialogue and understanding. It is in that way that an end may be put to yet another hotbed of tension and instability in the world.

Among the other conflicts in Central Asia, the conflict between two Member States of the United Nations, the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia, resulted at one stage in the occupation by Armenia of parts of Azerbaijan. As this occupation constitutes a violation of the principle of the inadmissability of the use of force in the resolution of disputes, it is incumbent upon Armenian forces to withdraw from Azerbaijani territory and to transfer this issue to the negotiating table for the purpose of arriving at a peaceful and just settlement which would safeguard the legitimate rights of the Azerbaijani people.

Such a review of the hotbeds of tension and crises in our world must not cause us to lose sight of the important and positive developments which the world witnessed over the past decade and which should give us cause for hope in a better future for mankind. We continue to have great expectations as a result of the positive developments in the aftermath of the cold war, and the emergence of solutions to pressing problems in Cambodia, the Middle East and Northern Ireland. The historic change in South Africa has brought down the curtain on the system of apartheid and brought forth a new South Africa based on justice and equality. We welcome these positive developments which are bound to contribute to the strengthening of the international tendency to move towards compliance with the principles of international law, respect for the resolutions of international legality, the renunciation of the use of force in favour of dialogue as a means for resolving problems and disputes.

A general overview of international economic issues and the role played by the United Nations to strengthen international cooperation shows that the success of the Organization in dealing with economic issues and promoting international development, is also tied to the commitment of its Members to the United Nations Charter.

The conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations is a commendable example of the international community's success in addressing a number of sensitive issues with unprecedented results. We are witnessing the emergence of the World Trade Organization, which we hope will embody our vision of an institutionalized global economic system. The Marakesh conference of the contracting parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has succeeded in fulfilling the aims of the Bretton Woods Conference.

While we appreciate this important development, we must state our concerns over the increase in protectionism and the resulting tensions between trading partners. This development contradicts the premises of the Uruguay Round regarding the importance of allowing market forces to play their natural role in economic affairs in a manner which allows nations to benefit from comparative advantages and from the optimal utilization of resources. This can only be achieved through serious international efforts to ensure free trade. We also wish to state our concern over the increase in protectionism in the guise of protecting the environment, and in particular the increased taxation on petroleum.

At this point, I wish to emphasize the importance the Gulf Cooperation Council attaches to the protection of the environment, which is reflected in the adoption by our emerging industries of the highest standards of environmental protection. We are concerned that petroleum, which is our principal export commodity, is already heavily burdened by taxation, and yet it is now being targeted for further taxation while other, more polluting fuels are receiving subsidies from Governments. Coal is a case in point: according to studies published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the International Energy Agency, coal subsidies in industrial States amount to more than twice

the cost of comparable energy provided by imported petroleum. Furthermore, according to the same sources, tax reforms that take into consideration the carbon content of fuel could produce more than double the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions targeted by the proposed carbon taxes without further taxation on petroleum.

We, the member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council, are convinced that imposing additional taxes on petroleum will not contribute to the environment but will instead distort international trade. This would adversely affect not only the economies of oil-exporting nations, but also those of oil-importing nations. It would also undermine the development efforts of developing countries.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its sister States in the Gulf Cooperation Council have great respect for the United Nations Charter, for international legality and for the resolutions deriving therefrom. We have not, and will not, hesitate to work towards strengthening the role of the United Nations and enhancing its effectiveness to ensure international peace and security and promote international cooperation. We hope with all sincerity that all other Member States will share this view when dealing with the various issues before the Assembly at this session.

We are confident that the opportunity to achieve success still remains before us and that what is required is to heed the words of God Almighty:

> "And say work; and soon Allah will observe your work, and his messenger, and the believer".

The President *(interpretation from French):* I call next on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Paraguay, His Excellency Mr. Luis Maria Ramirez Boettner.

Mr. Ramirez Boettner (Paraguay) *(interpretation from Spanish):* I wish cordially to greet you, Mr. Amara Essy of Côte d'Ivoire, and to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. I pledge the fullest cooperation of the delegation of Paraguay.

Nor can I fail to echo the congratulations offered to Ambassador Samuel Insanally on the way he guided the work of the last session of the General Assembly.

It is my pleasure also to hail the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and convey to him well-deserved congratulations on the excellent manner in which he has carried out his tasks. On behalf of the Government and the people of Paraguay, a founding Member of the United Nations, I pledge to him our full support for the Organization. It is our hope that he will visit our country as soon as he can; this would be further testament to our support for the United Nations and to our expectations as to what the United Nations can do to assist Paraguay in its current process of full democratization. That democratization has been under way in Paraguay since February 1989; it is now being consolidated under the Administration of Mr. Juan Carlos Wasmosy, President of the Republic.

In this Hall one year ago, the President of Paraguay committed himself to consolidating the democratic process, with the support of the vast majority of Paraguayans from the different political parties and organizations that demonstrate the pluralism of our society, which is irrevocably determined to defend freedom, democracy and respect for human rights. Today, the name of Paraguay does not appear in the dossiers of human rights violations. Not a single United Nations or other agency of the international community has failed to note the undeniable progress in our country in every area connected with dignifying the human person, and the efforts we have made in the social sector.

Hence, as I pledge on behalf of my Government and my entire society that we shall never, under any circumstances, diverge from the democratic ideal, I cannot fail to observe that problems remain in achieving a level of development with social justice; we shall keep trying to solve them resolutely, and in many cases with international cooperation.

We shall not be satisfied until we secure for our inhabitants - Paraguayans and foreigners whom we have welcomed into our land - living standards considered adequate according to United Nations indices. In view of the magnitude of the task, we again stress that the burden cannot be borne by one people alone. For us to be competitive, conditions in the international system must change: markets must be more open; credit must be more readily available, and at lower interest rates; and technology must be more accessible. We therefore believe in global solidarity, especially of the developed nations.

The people of the developing countries cannot be asked to make greater sacrifices than they are already making unless they see a similar trend towards the transformation of the international community. If

democracy and freedom are to exist and endure, peoples must enjoy development and better living conditions.

I should like briefly to refer to our economic recovery, which began in 1989 and has produced very favourable results, even during a period of transition and major structural changes.

Paraguay has been pursuing a policy of free trade and floating exchange rates, coupled with total freedom of movement for financial services and capital. The external debt has been reduced to $1.26 billion, almost the same as our current reserves of $1 billion. Paraguay offers a variety of tax incentives to both its own and outside investors for investment in production activities. These incentives place our country among those offering the best and most attractive terms in Latin America.

Our privatization policy, which started with money-losing national industries, is already enshrined in our legal code. Furthermore, we project a growth in gross domestic product of 4.5 per cent this year.

Education and training are a major priority of our Government, because it feels that accelerated development depends on well-trained people.

As regards economic integration, the Treaty of Asunción was signed in the capital of Paraguay in 1991, establishing the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR). At the recent meeting of the Presidents of the MERCOSUR countries, held in Buenos Aires on 5 August, they took a decisive step forward by agreeing by consensus to establish a common external tariff.

In connection with this economic integration, we are pleased to confirm that Paraguay firmly and enthusiastically supports the negotiations on the entry into MERCOSUR of the fraternal Republics of Bolivia and Chile. Paraguay has suggested to its MERCOSUR partners the establishment of essential supranational machinery, such as the office of secretary-general and a court of justice. That would allow us to hold joint negotiations with the European Union, as has seemed feasible since its Council's Corfu meeting, and with the signatories of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The summit of American nations convened in Miami by President Clinton will be an event of great significance for relations in this hemisphere in our common search for ever greater understanding among countries of this continent on political, economic and trade matters.

At the subregional level, only a few weeks ago we were able to set in motion the first of 20 turbines of the huge Yacyretá hydroelectric dam, built jointly by Paraguay and Argentina.

The Government of Paraguay has worked hard to develop ties with the outside world in order to break out of the isolation arising from its landlocked condition and, until 1989, its deliberate marginalization by an authoritarian Government.

In bilateral terms, though it may seem redundant to say this, it is appropriate to recall that Paraguay benefits from a vast hydroelectric capacity already in place: the Itaipú station, shared with Brazil, with an output of 12.6 million kilowatts; and that at Yacyretá, shared with Argentina, with an output of some 4 million kilowatts. There is therefore no question but that Paraguay is now, and will remain, an ideal place for major foreign and domestic investment and for implementing a policy of industrialization, based on our abundant, low-cost energy.

It must be remembered, however, that Paraguay suffers a structural limitation that would appear to limit its development potential: its lack of a seaboard. We wish to turn this handicap, which has had a very negative impact on Paraguay in the past, into an advantage. I refer to the fact that Paraguay, being at the centre of MERCOSUR, can act as a hinge or pivot *par excellence*, together with Bolivia, between MERCOSUR and the Andean Common Market.

At the regional, Latin American level, I wish to refer first to Paraguay's involvement in the Fourth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government. The presence of our entire Ibero-American community, together with Spain and Portugal, strengthened us all, because of the cultural, historical, political and other ties that bind us closely. I should like to stress that Paraguay regards this conference as an essential link in its ties with the European Union and as a major forum with great potential.

Another important event this year, again at the regional level, was the Eighth Conference of Presidents and Heads of Government of the Rio Group, which ended a few weeks ago. Paraguay fully endorsed the Declaration of the Rio Group, particularly with regard to the situations in Haiti and Cuba and the problem of drug-trafficking.

Paraguay actively participated in producing the declaration in regard to the fraternal Republic of Cuba, which expresses the strong hope that it will introduce significant political and economic reforms in accordance with the people's will, and stating that we respect the self-determination of peoples and the principle of non-intervention. Paraguay lent its fullest support to the Rio Group's decisions, including its declaration on lifting the embargo against Cuba.

With regard to the new post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Paraguay wishes to state that his great efforts with regard to individual rights must be complemented by the promotion of social and collective human rights.

We have throughout fully endorsed the principle of the peaceful resolution of international conflicts, including the case of Haiti. In this, Paraguay is strengthened by its traditional commitment to peace. In 1923 we contributed to international law for the Americas with the Gondra Treaty of conciliation and arbitration, which has become one of the pillars of Latin America's juridical system.

Along these lines of thought and practice, Paraguay enthusiastically welcomes the recent progress in connection with the United Nations Decade of International Law. Paraguay supports the codification of this branch of law; it will be one of the greatest achievements of the United Nations. In this connection, Paraguay has signed and ratified the main agreements that constitute the legal structure created through the United Nations.

Paraguay is keenly following and promoting mankind's urgent demand for international cooperation for development. For it is just as important to build peace through development as to maintain it through law. Here I want once more publicly to express our deep thanks to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), whose timely and effective work we have seen at first hand. We also acknowledge the fundamental importance of the development work of the World Bank, the Inter-American Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

We hail the Secretary-General's recent decision to seek better coordination within the United Nations system on technical cooperation and to make the Administrator of UNDP fully responsible for coordination system wide, including with the regional commissions and all other programmes. From this decision the United Nations will gain in efficiency and in the impact of its world-wide activities.

Paraguay also backs the entire process for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade and the opening of negotiations on international economic cooperation for development, which appears on the agenda of the General Assembly.

Yet, in a spirit of honour and fraternity, I wish to repeat what I said here in New York at the June 1994 session of the Economic and Social Council - namely, that:

> "We feel that the distribution of funds for United Nations programmes and projects world wide is imbalanced; as Latin Americans, we believe that the proportion allocated to our region, by UNDP for example, is unfair: only 8.66 per cent is allocated for programmes in Latin American countries, while other regions are allocated 50.42 per cent and 40.67 per cent respectively".

UNDP contributes only 17 per cent to Paraguay's programme; Paraguay pays the rest. But we appreciate and wish to continue to count on UNDP's support.

Paraguay looks forward with keen interest and commitment to the World Summit for Social Development, to be held at Copenhagen. We are preparing to participate in that conference and have high expectations about the positive results it can achieve. We have promised that the President of the Republic of Paraguay will attend that great event. Paraguay is so enthusiastic about the conference because the three basic items on its agenda are very closely connected with today's social problems: social integration, particularly of the most marginalized and disadvantaged groups; relief and reduction of poverty; and an increase in productive employment. As the draft agenda points out, all of this must be in the context of a propitious economic environment - and, we would add, with international cooperation. Here, Paraguay cannot fail to note that a characteristic of our times is economic growth without job-creation, a situation that must be corrected, since one of today's problems is indeed unemployment.

Paraguay earnestly supports ongoing efforts, will support future efforts, developed by the United Nations in all areas of disarmament: nuclear, chemical and others.

The Assembly should know that in the area of social development Paraguay has established a special commission to prepare for the Fourth World Conference

on Women, to be held at Beijing. The commission brings together State and private bodies, which are drafting a final report on the situation of women in Paraguay.

As a full member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), Paraguay hopes that the results of the Uruguay Round will have beneficial effects for us. We are convinced that the Uruguay Round is the beginning of a process of downscaling policies of subsidy and protectionism. Paraguay confidently looks forward to the follow-up to GATT and to the work of its complementary successor body, the World Trade Organization.

Paraguay fully shares in the entire international community's anguish at drug trafficking, and at the evil effects of that phenomenon. Notwithstanding our meagre resources, we are doing whatever is necessary to root it out wherever it is hiding, and to fight it head on. But, with the strength derived from reason, Paraguay affirms that the consumer countries, transit countries and producer countries alike must undertake an equal commitment to adopting vigorous measures. Unilateral efforts, however vigorous, to combat drug production and trafficking can never be successful without gradual shrinkage of the markets that give rise to production and trafficking in the first place.

Linked with this universal scourge, which we condemn with all our strength and conviction, is the phenomenon of corruption, a human failing that is seen in varying degrees in all four corners of the Earth. Corruption spreads its tentacles as a reflection of a civilization that is prodigious in economic, financial, scientific, technical and industrial terms but is, we must admit, often found wanting in the firm ethical underpinnings and the genuine human values that strengthen and give vitality to a culture.

Paraguay is following with great attention all United Nations efforts with respect to agenda item 142, "Measures to eliminate international terrorism". Recent grave events in certain parts of the world, indeed on our own continent, clearly show that the international community needs a new approach, through well-coordinated action, to overcoming this serious problem, which, as we know, sometimes links drug-trafficking mafias with terrorism.

On the question of equitable representation on and an increase in the membership of the Security Council, Paraguay believes that in today's changing world we must attune the Organization to the requirements of the times and current circumstances. Hence, my country believes it just to democratize the representation of States on the Security Council, and for the Council's decision-making to be transparent. The world situation has changed, and the United Nations must adapt to those changes. We repeat what we said at the last meeting of the Rio Group - namely, that

> "because of its legal tradition and its contribution to the cause of peace, the Latin American and Caribbean region must be considered in any expansion of the Security Council".

Paraguay also firmly supports parallel efforts to revitalize the functioning of the General Assembly.

I want to mention and to highlight our great satisfaction at the obvious, sustained advance of democracy in Latin America, and at the consolidation of the various processes that are under way.

We should like to reaffirm that the United Nations must continue to apply the principle of universality, making room within its ranks for all peace-loving States that meet the requirements as set forth in the Charter and that are prepared to honour its principles and purposes. We believe that the entry of the Republic of China as an independent country should be considered, along with the case of any other State that meets the conditions I have just mentioned.

I should like officially to declare that, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, Paraguay pledges even now to have its President take part personally in the session of the Assembly. The President of our Republic will make the voice of my homeland heard on that most welcome occasion.

Meanwhile, my country has established an ad hoc commission on the commemoration of that major event.

The environment, the subject of the magnificent 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, is a matter of the greatest concern to Paraguay, which is prepared to support any and all initiatives aimed at preserving the environment through sustainable development, as well as to enact any appropriate measures that do not undermine economic growth.

By the same token, Paraguay declares its deep concern at the situation affecting the Pilcomayo River, which is an international waterway inasmuch as its source

is in Bolivia and it forms the border between Argentina and Paraguay.

We are now facing a major environmental problem since that international river springs from the mountains and is now growing shallower in its course because of sedimentation build-up. Moreover, the Pilcomayo, owing to works undertaken on Argentine territory, has had some 70 per cent of its volume absorbed in the territory of our neighbour. These facilities are doing a great deal of damage to the Chaco region of Paraguay, especially to its livestock and to the population.

Paraguay hopes that matters will return to normal, that is, that the course of the Pilcomayo River will resume its balance, irrigating both border areas in an equitable way. We fully trust that we will manage to reach complete agreement with the Republic of Argentina to restore this balance at the earliest possible time.

To that end, we will have to go to the very source of the Pilcomayo to seek a rational and comprehensive solution which, inevitably, will require a trilateral agreement in the form of a law governing the confluence of interests of Bolivia, Argentina and Paraguay in respect of the river's course.

As Paraguay is a land-locked country, it has an especially keen interest in the Convention on the Law of the Sea, which our country ratified as early as 1986. The provisions of the Convention allow for the mitigation of disadvantages for those States that have no direct access to the sea and, for Paraguay, this will open up the possibility of sharing in the wealth of the deep seabed, or "Zone", which the Convention calls the common heritage of mankind. We view with optimism the entry into force of that Convention on 16 November this year. In the same context, Paraguay has signed the Agreement amending the Convention.

All developing countries aspire to sharing in the scientific and technological progress of the modern world. It seems to me that, together with the other measures the United Nations has already taken or is preparing to take, serious thought should be given to creating a global fund for scientific and technological development that would deepen the relationship between the major research centres in developed countries and the universities and research centres in developing countries.

I should like to express Paraguay's deep satisfaction at the demise of the apartheid regime in the Republic of South Africa and at the observance of human rights for all the ethnic communities of the country. Paraguay has not forgotten the sister nations in Africa, which are striving to overcome immense difficulties in their quest for sustainable development and which deserve wide international support.

Paraguay is similarly disposed towards the sister Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with which we enjoy fraternal ties. We wish its people peace and brotherhood, and will strive to commit the United Nations towards that end.

We are very pleased to congratulate the State of Israel, the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Kingdom of Jordan on their having strengthened the foundations of fraternal and constructive coexistence in the region, initiated in the agreements between Israel and Egypt. We trust that, given the help of the United Nations and of other major actors, the peace and security process in that part of the world will make steady progress, with the cooperation of other major countries in the region itself.

I should like to voice a few thoughts with regard to the recent Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. Paraguay joined in the Conference Declaration and Programme of Action, while clearly and explicitly placing on record its demand for the defence of life and agreeing, in broad terms, with consensual and voluntary family planning. For that reason, Paraguay lodged two reservations similar to those expressed by other countries that share our view.

As I bring my statement to a close, allow me to voice a personal reflection that arises from my many years in international life. I have been active in diplomacy since 1936. Apart from some time spent in academia, I have served my country or the United Nations. I lived through the beginning and the end of the Second World War. My generation was indeed moved when the United Nations Charter was signed. We were filled with hope, and the world seemed to be on the right path in reordering its affairs. We have travelled a long way since then, but we remain all the more convinced of the crucial need for this world Organization.

I have personally known each one of the Secretaries-General of our Organization. I have worked closely with a number of them and shared their problems, their fears and their concerns as we struggled for a more just world.

It has been a privilege to be both a United Nations official and a diplomat accredited to this Organization. Now, in my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs, I feel I have been granted an opportunity to renew the commitment of my nation and my own personal commitment. That commitment is genuine and unadulterated support for the effort to keep the peace through law and to build it through development.

The United Nations ideal today compels us to adopt a new way of thinking and living. Indeed, we are not merely representatives of sovereign States or members of a world Organization. We are protagonists and agents who share the same planet, which is in many respects both very similar and very different.

We have to show greater solidarity and regain our universal vision.

As human beings, we all have an interest in whatever makes us more human, in all senses of the term. The vital force that springs from this vision helps us in our mission of saving our common home, the Earth.

Mankind and the Earth: therein lies the key motivation for our commitment and for our endeavours, beneath the majestic gaze of the Creator.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I call next on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, His Excellency Mr. Ablassé Ouédraogo.

Mr. Ouédraogo (Burkina Faso) *(interpretation from French):* The honour and the duty of presiding over the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly have been entrusted to you, Mr. President, and, through you, to your country, Côte d'Ivoire. Burkina Faso and all of Africa are moved by this signal honour.

Beyond the legitimate pride experienced by my delegation, I should like to reaffirm our full readiness to assist you. Your wealth of diplomatic experience, together with your professional and human qualities, will ensure the success of our deliberations.

You have succeeded Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, who, with discretion and professionalism, determination and logical organization, guided a forty-eighth session that was rich in ideas, initiatives and various kinds of fruitful contacts. We thank him for this.

The Secretary-General of our Organization, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has consistently and courageously continued both in word and in deed to chart a course designed to reaffirm the mission of the Organization and to participate in defining the present and future spheres of action of the international community.

Indeed, vision, courage and patience are virtues of which our world is in dire need. We have moved from the static certainties of the international environment of less than a decade ago to the daily, fluid and dangerous uncertainties that surround us and sometimes overwhelm us, and there is an urgent need to find, or to recover, a reliable compass and collective will and solidarity.

However, we have been witnessing a disintegration of the old order. We must indeed note that the post-cold-war period has been characterized by the simultaneous emergence of heated conflicts that pit nations against each other or rend apart their integral elements. From Bosnia and Herzegovina to Rwanda, the causes and means may differ more or less noticeably, but the immediate consequence is always identical: the enormous suffering of peoples.

During the forty-seventh session of our General Assembly, Burkina Faso stated:

> "In their millions, people are cast out into a life of wandering; children are robbed of their childhood, and of their adolescence too; a future without hope is already the lot of a growing number of people caught in the crossfire between one world that is dying and another that is being born." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Plenary Meetings, 21st meeting, p. 86)*

Africa continues to be shaken by upheavals and crises of all sorts, and particular attention should be paid to them.

With regard to Angola, Burkina Faso welcomes the present efforts aimed at implementing the Peace Agreements and supports Security Council resolutions 864 (1993) and 932 (1994). We urge UNITA to negotiate with greater firmness and thus allow the Lusaka meeting to yield the hoped-for results for peace and the well-being of the people of Angola as well as of the subregion.

As to Mozambique, it is our hope that the holding of free and democratic elections this month will put an end to so many years of confrontation and will further commit this brotherly country to a course of reconstruction and national reconciliation for development and peace.

We hope that a solution can be found in Western Sahara within the framework of a referendum whose terms of reference will be accepted by all.

We welcome the fact that in Burundi progress is being made in the process begun and supported both by the United Nations and by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and we hope that the election of the President of the Republic on 30 September 1994 will make possible positive developments in this situation very soon. Burkina Faso, within the framework of the OAU, is making its contribution to this process.

In Liberia, because of the lack of confidence among the parties, neither the demobilization nor the disarmament provided for in the Cotonou Agreement has fully taken place. These measures had been advocated to bring about an atmosphere propitious to the establishment of democratic institutions. Burkina Faso continues to support the Cotonou Agreement of 25 July 1993 as well as the Akossombo agreement of 12 September last.

In Somalia, far from the cameras and the media, the tragedy that was so widely reported by those media two years ago continues. The same players are pursuing the same conflict just as chaotically and relentlessly, without any sign of the will to put an end to it through dialogue and negotiation.

In Rwanda, the unspeakable tragedy that has combined genocide with intransigence has showed the international community its limits and the procrastination of which it has been guilty. After having hastily decided on a withdrawal during the first weeks of April 1994, the international community, responding to the clamorous indignation of public opinion, was forced to review its position and find a way to return to the scene of the tragedy and attempt to limit its shameful and disastrous development. We should like here to thank those who have wished to confine the irreparable and immeasurable damage within the limits of the restored human conscience. Without an active policy of reconciliation and national reconstruction, it is difficult to envisage a calm and stable future for that brotherly country. In this task, which is enormous in all respects, the Government of Rwanda will need all the assistance that can possibly be given it in a clear-sighted, responsible and committed manner. For its part, Burkina Faso, insofar as it is able, will tirelessly continue to make its contribution to Rwanda.

Annoyance, irritation and understandable fatigue now hold sway in the Security Council in its consideration of the questions of Liberia and Somalia; indeed, it is even thinking about leaving those two brotherly countries to their own devices. The reasoning put forward for this is that in an environment marked by a plethora of requests for material, financial and human resources, it is impossible to continue to deal with protagonists who prefer war to the loss of a power that has not yet truly even been achieved. It is true that peace cannot be imposed anywhere.

Burkina Faso is aware of this and experiences it every day as President Blaise Compaoré, putting these convictions into practice, engages in subregional mediation and thus makes his contribution to the great African plan for the necessary and indispensable integration of our continent.

Peace thus must be unremittingly pursued. And the task of diplomats is to work to find acceptable and viable terms.

Should we then leave all those areas of conflict to their own devices? The answer to this question will tell us more about all of us than about the protagonists of those crises.

In Asia and Latin America, the conflict situations with which our Organization is dealing are moving in a direction which gives us reasonable hope to see a settlement very soon. We encourage Kuwait and Iraq to respect resolution 833 (1993) of the Security Council. We are also encouraging dialogue between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea, as well as negotiations between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the nuclear issue.

Burkina Faso has welcomed and hailed the signing on 13 September 1993 of the historic agreement on the Declaration of Principles between President Arafat and Prime Minister Rabin, and also the signature on 4 May 1994 of the Agreement on Gaza and Jericho. Burkina Faso urges that this policy be pursued.

The first democratic elections have taken place in South Africa. The South African people now have

leaders that they have freely elected. We once again hail the eminence of President Mandela, as well as the merits of Vice-President De Klerk, for having been able, together with the people of South Africa, to lead South Africa towards a democratic and non-racial society. Here among us at last in the United Nations, South Africa will be able to play and fully shoulder its role in the community of nations, thus strengthening that principle of universality that we supported in a recent initiative concerning the Republic of China.

All of this indicates the extent to which political upheavals affect, sometimes in an extraordinary fashion, the lives of men, women and children on all continents. However, to use an expression that was used four years ago during the World Summit for Children, the world continues inexorably to witness a "silent emergency" that is still going on and is growing.

The global economy has experienced a recession that has more brutally and heartlessly affected the developing countries. This state of affairs has exacerbated situations of injustice and flagrant inequality. The improvement of the economic climate of the developing countries hinges on the growth of financial investment flows, on the transfer of technology, on the elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers, on just remuneration for commodities and raw materials. This is not new, and it will be reiterated as long as the developing countries do not have a greater say concerning the processes and machinery for decision-making relating to all these questions.

This is why an agenda for development is now urgent and of the highest priority. This agenda should put forward specific measures for implementation focused on growth and development, and integrate the strategies and plans for action negotiated and adopted during the United Nations conferences. From Rio to Cairo, it has been possible to obtain consensus, but what is still missing are the new and additional resources with which to implement the decisions taken. In this connection, we hope that the implementation of the International Convention to Combat Desertification, signed in Paris on 14 and 15 October 1994, will not also suffer from this lack.

While the developing countries are fulfilling their share of commitments, the developed countries are balking at making their contributions. This is notably affecting the concept and the implementation of global partnership, which was so highly praised at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

We fear that, as regards the use made of their results, these Conferences have only been understood in terms of their theme, without taking account of development. If these comments are harsh, reality is even more so.

Problems build up while financial resources dry up. The eradication of poverty, in such a context, will be difficult to bring about and will have fewer chances for success. The commitment undertaken by the developed countries to allocate 0.7 per cent of their GNP to public assistance for development has not always been respected, except by a few of them.

Africa, more than the other continents, is in a situation that is critical and recognized as such by the United Nations. However, from the Programme of Action of the United Nations for the Economic Recovery and Development of Africa in 1986, to the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, adopted in 1991, nothing concrete has given concrete form to that commitment by the international community.

Over the last ten years, the African debt has been discussed *ad infinitum*, without, however, being reduced or eliminated to an extent likely to allow Africa to relaunch its economy and structure its markets. Several of our partners have made efforts, and we note the decision of the Group of Seven in Naples to expand the Trinidad Conditions to the performing African countries.

If this is a step in the right direction, it is not sufficient in a context where, as I said earlier, the deterioration of the terms of trade and the loss of preferential markets are increasing the burden of the debt. We therefore support the efforts of the Secretary-General aimed at establishing a fund for diversification, and we call upon the partners of Africa to play an active and positive role in establishing this fund.

In April 1994, the signing in Marrakesh of the Agreements of the Uruguay Round opened a new chapter in international trade relations, more or less establishing the marginalization of Africa, which had already been evident throughout the negotiations. We hope that the recently created World Trade Organization will be able to participate in the creation of a multilateral system of trade based on applicable, non-discriminatory relations, and that in particular it will take account of the interests of the developing countries.

On the basis of a concern for independence and for the integration of the global economy, access to resources, markets and technology, preferential assistance and compensation measures must be open to the developing countries. The spirit of this new configuration should not be motivated by charity but rather by the awareness that certain measures must be taken to ensure that the development of the world in partnership and solidarity takes place harmoniously. It is in the interest of all of us.

The forthcoming World Summit for Social Development, therefore, should emphasize man's needs and put man at the centre of development and of international cooperation in drawing up the objectives and specific commitments which we shall be undertaking. So too, the World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing will have to continue that work of intensification begun in Cairo during the International Conference on Population and Development: woman, the best agent for development.

For half a decade, the Member States of the United Nations have been involved in a series of Conferences that culminated in an acknowledgment of the following facts. The right to development exists. It must be reflected in reality. It is part of human rights. Development is possible only in peace, and peace itself can be maintained only through development. Democracy and development, therefore, are linked.

One after the other, the representatives who have spoken have emphasized the role of the United Nations. The Organization is the most valuable multilateral instrument available to nations. It is important that we give it the means to fulfil our ambitions and our projects.

The times have compelled us to confine ourselves to finding the answers that must be found for the urgent situations threatening the lives of human beings. Peace-keeping operations currently face unprecedented complexity and difficulty. We salute and thank the 73 nations that are offering their sons and their resources for the purpose of extinguishing flames kindled throughout the world by man's intransigence and madness.

Apart from the question of urgency, there are priorities. If these are understood and dealt with, the emergency situations of tomorrow and beyond will be eased, and we shall come closer to having a more stable, less unjust and more harmonious world.

A review of the United Nations system - the role, nature and place of the Security Council and of the General Assembly - is one of the urgent priorities that must be addressed if we are not to harm the future. It will become ever more difficult to wish for democracy in the world if democracy is avoided in the functioning and activity of the United Nations.

A year from now we shall be celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of this Organization. The profusion, complexity and simultaneousness of problems relentlessly assail societies and nature. Mankind will be able to face these challenges and difficulties only by assuming and accepting our complementarity and our interdependence. It is that initiative and that momentum which will renew our bond with the ideals proclaimed 49 years ago in a document signed in San Francisco, which we call the Charter of the United Nations.

Let us, therefore, be an Organization of truly united nations. This is possible only if there is a spirit of justice, peace and solidarity.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guinea, His Excellency Mr. Kozo Zoumanigui.

Mr. Zoumanigui (Guinea) *(interpretation from French):* It is a pleasure for me to speak for the first time in the General Assembly and to convey to its members the warm greetings of the people and the Government of the Republic of Guinea.

I should like to take this opportunity to convey to you, Sir, heartfelt congratulations on your notable election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. It is an honour to your country, Côte d'Ivoire, and to us the citizens of Guinea it is a fitting reflection of the trust that the international community places in the continent of Africa. I am convinced that your wisdom and your qualities as an experienced and competent diplomat will ensure the success of our work. My delegation assures you of its full support.

I should also like to congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Samuel Insanally of Guyana, who conducted the business of the forty-eighth session in such a masterly and intelligent manner.

I want also to pay well-deserved tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the tireless efforts he has made and the determination he has shown since his election to achieve the noble objectives assigned to the United Nations. His devotion to peace

and the promotion of international cooperation at a time marked by many complex changes guarantees the Organization's victory over the challenges facing humanity.

Mr. Eltinay (Sudan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

My Government welcomes South Africa's long-awaited return to this Organization following the dismantling of apartheid and the holding of the first multiracial, pluralist elections.

The forty-ninth session is being held at a time that is very favourable for the strengthening of international relations, thanks to more constructive dialogue. However, a quick look at the international scene shows that we are still far from the ideal of peace. Indeed, as soon as the bells of peace announced the end of the cold war the evil spirits were awakened. Here and there warlords are stirring up tension, bringing tragedy to innocent victims - in particular, the elderly, women and children.

In Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia, Bosnia, Afghanistan and Angola - to refer to just some countries - killing, rape and destruction are going on. We are all concerned, yet we all seem to be powerless.

It is regrettable that most of this tragedy is being played out in Africa, a continent already sorely tried by economic crises, natural disasters and forced migration. My delegation believes that the international community as a whole, and this Organization in particular, should act with greater firmness and unity to put an end to this tragic situation.

For five years now, fratricidal conflicts have plunged Liberia into chaos and desolation. This conflict's damaging consequences for neighbouring States have become unbearable. Despite the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States, the Organization of African Unity and the international community to secure the effective implementation of the many peace plans, the latest of which is the Akosombo, Ghana, plan, the crisis continues. My Government makes an urgent appeal to the international community to become more energetically involved in the quest for a final solution to this conflict.

Other regions of the world too are experiencing the same difficulties that threaten international peace and security. The Government of Guinea encourages the United Nations to continue its efforts to restore peace, and urges the parties to various conflicts to demonstrate wisdom by choosing dialogue.

I am thinking in particular of the situations in the Middle East and on the Korean peninsula. Once again, only a proper political approach, taking account of the specific values of the parties concerned and of the political and material needs of the populations, will produce the conditions for lasting peace.

I welcome the positive developments in the Middle East, exemplified by the peace agreement signed in Washington between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and also that signed between Israel and Jordan. These agreements constitute in many respects important milestones in the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, and they offer hope for a lasting and comprehensive peace in that region.

By the same token, the Government of Guinea encourages the two Korean States to continue their effort for the independent and peaceful reunification of their common homeland. I have every hope that the negotiations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States will lead the two parties to continue the dialogue to bring about a peaceful solution to the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula and to improve relations between the two countries.

The tragic events that have shaken the political life of Haiti for three years now have captured the attention of the international community. My Government hopes that the efforts of the international community will make it possible to put an end to that crisis and to alleviate the suffering of the people of Haiti through the restoration of democracy.

The remarkable progress made through the bilateral and multilateral negotiations in the field of disarmament and arms control clearly underscores the determination of Member States to shield our planet from the spectre of destruction. However, many perils still hamper our efforts to bring about collective security, which would encompass the related problems of development, environment and human rights. In certain sensitive regions, the trade in conventional weapons and their frequent use in conflicts, along with the trade in nuclear materials and the desire of some countries to possess nuclear weapons, add to our Organization's responsibilities and call for stringent verification measures. Objectives in this field should include a nuclear test ban and the promotion of the establishment of denuclearized or nuclear-free zones in all parts of the world.

In this brief overview of some of the major issues in the world, I wish to stress the importance of peace-keeping operations. I consider it useful to rethink the problems of such operations, whose motives and procedures for implementation seem very often to involve double standards. We believe that in order to give them the desired legitimacy and effectiveness these operations should be the subject of coordination and dialogue in which all United Nations Member States take part, for collective security is the business of all nations of the world, be they large or small.

Africa's keen interest in the quest for ways and means to guarantee peace, security and stability on our continent is reflected in the mechanism for the prevention, settlement and management of conflicts established by the Organization of African Unity. This instrument is already functioning; it deals with all forms of crisis that might jeopardize African peoples' efforts at economic, social and cultural development. A peace fund has been set up to give financial support to the actions undertaken by this mechanism.

While appreciating the efforts of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, we note with regret the absence of any significant results in the implementation of the measures adopted. Today we are concerned to see that inequalities in international trade are worsening and that debt-servicing, which is a burden on the meagre resources obtained from structural adjustment, require bold action. Furthermore, the debt burden neutralizes the mobilization of funding for commodity exports, which are constantly depreciating because of inequitable terms of trade.

In my delegation's view, there can be no development if there is not an increase in income from commodities, whose prices, unfortunately, are not controlled by the developing countries. The quest for prosperity could be a danger, since it engenders a strong migratory flow from the South to the North.

Despite the socio-economic changes carried out in our States to stimulate private initiative and cooperative movements and to improve living conditions, the African continent is still experiencing an unprecedented economic crisis. To this precarious picture we must add the resurgence of social problems, such as juvenile delinquency, illicit trade in drugs and narcotics, unemployment, the AIDS pandemic and the deleterious effects of persistent drought and other natural disasters. In this context, we support the recommendations and decisions of the international Conference held in Tokyo on African development. Furthermore, my delegation urges the international community to increase official development assistance and requests the United Nations to give greater support to the laudable efforts of the African countries in their economic-recovery policies, in keeping with Article 55 of the Charter.

The concept of development cannot be limited to the economic dimension alone. It must necessarily take into account social and cultural dimensions. As long as some are afraid of the progress of others, the myth of Sisyphus will prevail and part of our globe will be for ever harnessed to the yoke. Only dialogue, tolerance and the elimination of poverty throughout the world will guarantee lasting peace and strengthen the unity and stability of nations.

In this regard we should stress the relevance of the Secretary-General's Agenda for Development. Highlighting the many aspects of development and its connection with peace, the environment, international security and human rights, it is a reference document in our quest for solutions to the many economic difficulties facing the developing countries. It has thus enriched our discussion on sustainable development.

The protection of basic human rights, the satisfaction of mankind's needs, and social justice are central to my country's concerns. My delegation welcomed the holding in Cairo of the International Conference on Population and Development, and we hope that the work of the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in 1995, and that of the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen, will give in-depth consideration to other complex aspects of this important subject.

In my country, the Republic of Guinea, we have undertaken an ambitious programme of political, economic, cultural and social restructuring. The process of establishing democratic and liberal institutions will be totally completed during the last quarter of this year with the holding of legislative elections. In order to pay the price of political and socio-economic liberalization, we need, in addition to substantial financial assistance, considerable support and understanding from the entire international community.

Member States are preparing to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. This important event will offer an opportunity for us all to recall the very special circumstances that gave birth to

our Organization and to pay a well-deserved tribute to the work of the founding fathers.

My country is making great efforts to prepare for this great event, and to this end a national organizational committee has been established.

The serious international problems to which I have just referred are a measure of the gravity of the challenges facing mankind, as well as the responsibilities of the United Nations. Our Organization has gained undeniable prestige, because of its increased burdens in managing world affairs. Nevertheless, in order to become more effective, it needs to be restructured and revitalized. This applies to the Security Council and the other main bodies.

Reforms must be based on the principle of equality of Member States, and must reflect a balance in the decision-making process between the various bodies of the system. That is what is needed for the United Nations to succeed in its mission of maintaining international peace and security and promoting a balanced world economy.

The embryonic new international order, freed of all uncertainty and threats of instability, will emerge from such a development.

The President *(interpretation from Arabic):* I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, His Excellency Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad.

Mr. Lengsavad (Lao People's Democratic Republic) *(spoke in Lao; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation):* First, I am very pleased to convey to the President my warmest congratulations on his election to preside over the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. His wide experience and knowledge of international affairs, his well-known wisdom and patience are guarantees of success in the many difficult tasks of this session.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of our Organization, for the praiseworthy efforts he has made in the service of world peace and development. Aware how heavy is his burden in this complex, fast-changing time, we wish him every possible success in the discharge of his lofty duties.

The present session of the General Assembly is taking place at a time when the world situation is still undergoing very complex changes. While the end of the bipolar era opened the door to dialogue and cooperation between States, it did not usher in an era of peace, which the world so badly needs if it is to construct a sound world economy. In some regions of Europe, Africa and Asia, religious, ethnic, tribal and border conflicts, often of tragic proportions, are still raging, thus making the international situation unstable and fragile. It therefore seems clear that it will be difficult to achieve a new world order in which true peace prevails and in which peoples and nations, large and small, powerful and weak, rich and poor, benefit. The international community should give more thought to this matter and join together to build a new era of peace and justice, to which the peoples of the world have so long aspired.

In Europe, the situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is still tense. The risk of new military clashes between the various parties remains. It is our view that the parties to this painful conflict should demonstrate wisdom and above all realism by concluding a just and equitable political settlement as soon as possible, and thus contribute to the restoration of peace in that country and in the entire region.

In Africa, after so many years of efforts, both within and outside the United Nations, the Republic of South Africa is free at last. In a spirit of national reconciliation, the parties concerned have managed to reach an understanding and to cooperate in the building of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. We continue to believe that the people of South Africa, under the wise leadership of President Nelson Mandela, will prove equal to the task of overcoming the obstacles that face them and begin the economic development of their beloved land.

Still in Africa, in Rwanda, we have seen unprecedented bloodshed. The Government and people of Laos strongly condemn the abominable carnage, which has been described as genocide of an innocent population, and we call upon the parties to the conflict to take the necessary steps to prevent such unacceptable crimes from ever happening again.

The world is following closely the disturbing humanitarian situation in the Caribbean. In our view, there should be a political solution to this complex situation, through sincere dialogue between the parties directly concerned. The signing of the joint communiqué of 9 September 1994 by the Republic of Cuba and the United States of America to resolve the problem of the

exodus of Cubans - the consequence of more than 30 years of externally imposed economic constraints - is clear proof of this. That agreement, the fruit of long and difficult negotiations between the two parties, constitutes an important first step in the settlement of their differences, which should contribute to strengthening peace, stability and cooperation in the region.

In Haiti, due to the animosities still keenly felt by the partisans of the military regime and President Aristide's sympathizers, the political situation continues to be fragile and complex. We believe that, in the best interests of the Haitian nation, it is time for the parties to show great wisdom and begin the economic reconstruction of their beloved land.

In the Middle East, the autonomous interim Palestinian Authority, established in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho region, pursuant to the Declaration of Principles on interim autonomy arrangements, signed in Washington on 13 September 1993, marked a new phase in the search for a just and lasting comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. We welcome this new, crucial step, and hope that the parties to the conflict will do everything possible to achieve a comprehensive settlement, just and honourable for all, within the framework of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and other relevant United Nations resolutions.

In Western Asia, despite countless efforts exerted towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict, Afghanistan remains the theatre of a bloody civil war. In conformity with the recent statement of the President of the Security Council on 11 August 1994, we address an appeal to the parties concerned immediately to put an end to their hostilities, achieve national reconciliation and begin the difficult reconstruction of their ravaged homeland.

In the Korean peninsula, after months of uncertainty, dialogue between the parties concerned has finally resumed. We warmly encourage that dialogue and the Lao delegation welcomes the conclusion of the Agreement signed in Geneva on 12 August 1994 between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America. Because of its importance everything should be done to ensure that this sensitive region of the world becomes a nuclear-weapon-free zone. In the interests of peace, stability and cooperation in that region as well as in the world, it is essential that all the parties concerned show understanding and mutual trust in order to find a peaceful solution to the issues between them.

In South-East Asia a new era of cooperation in areas of common interest between countries of the region has grown ever stronger. The inauguration in April of the Lao-Thai friendship bridge across the Mekong, built with financial assistance and cooperation from the Government and the people of Australia, is an especially salient event for Laos, Thailand and Australia, as well as other countries of the region, in our efforts further to strengthen regional cooperation in different areas. In addition, the Heads of State or Government of our respective countries have regularly been exchanging visits with a view to expanding and deepening their friendship and cooperation in an extensive and fruitful field of cooperation. The participation of my country, once again, in the ministerial meeting of the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in July in Bangkok, Thailand, once again demonstrates our sincere desire to cooperate in all possible areas with the countries of ASEAN, thus responding to the desires and deep aspirations of the peoples of the region and the world.

The present situation in the Kingdom of Cambodia remains the subject of major world attention. As an immediate neighbour, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, ardently wishes that the Cambodian people will be able to live their lives in peace, in an atmosphere of national reconciliation, and to work for the reconstruction of their homeland, which will thus contribute to the strengthening of peace and cooperation in the region. To that end we fully support the various measures that have been taken by the Cambodian Government, under the leadership of His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Ranariddh, and His Excellency Mr. Hun Sen.

In Myanmar a new, important event has taken place. Efforts towards national reconciliation and the start of economic cooperation with the outside world have been bearing their initial fruits, thus consolidating the stability of the country.

In the Lao People's Democratic Republic we note, fortunately, that on the whole our economic performance has been good. On the average, annual economic growth for the past three years has been of the order of 6 per cent to 7 per cent in real terms. The inflation rate has not exceeded 10 per cent a year and exchange rates generally remain stable. No less importantly, foreign investment has considerably increased. At the present time the Lao Government is exerting major efforts to achieve the goals set in its socio-economic development strategy from now to the year 2000.

That strategy presented to the fifth round-table meeting organized expressly for the Lao People's Democratic Republic in Geneva last June, under the sponsorship of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), was conceived as a realistic and trustworthy document and has received broad support from participants. On behalf of the Lao Government and people I wish to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the friendly countries, international organizations and non-governmental organizations for the assistance they have afforded us in the past in our efforts towards national development and we hope to be able to continue to benefit from that assistance in various fields.

The world economy, far from improving, still faces an uncertain future. Marked by recession and imbalances, it also suffers from grave structural problems. Developed countries do not hesitate to take certain measures that run counter to the legitimate interests of developing countries. Because of the world economy's interdependence it is important that developed countries undertake to cooperate with the developing countries in order to restore the economy and to promote development in the interests of all. In that respect it is essential fully to honour commitments undertaken in support of international cooperation as they have been set forth in resolutions of the General Assembly, in particular, the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade and the resolutions of the conferences that have followed it.

The question relating to drug abuse and illicit trafficking remains an issue of world concern. Aware of the disastrous consequences that can result from this, the Lao Government has taken vigorous measures to encourage the population gradually to give up the poppy crop and to choose other substitute crops, created a special unit against drug abuse, and established cooperation with neighbouring countries in order to make its contribution to the international fight against this scourge. As part of these efforts and with the assistance of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP) this year we have developed a comprehensive programme for drug control. That programme, the cost of which is $35 million, consists of setting up 16 projects, including the strengthening of drug control administration, reduction of supply through eradication of the poppy crop, a strategy for treatment and rehabilitation, and the establishment of a special investigation unit. With assistance and cooperation from the international community we hope to be able to achieve the goal we pursue.

The advancement and defence of human rights is an important and sensitive question. Unanimously seen as universal, these rights, often having historical, cultural and religious implications, are inseparable and interdependent. On that note we welcome the creation of the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights and it is our hope that the High Commissioner will effectively discharge the very responsible functions that have been assigned to him.

The world exists in an uncertain international political environment. In that context the United Nations, the only universal multilateral forum, should have a crucial role to play. Strengthened by the purposes and principles of its Charter, it is in a position to provide the necessary framework for cooperation, dialogue among States and the maintenance of international peace and security.

In order to carry out its noble task effectively in this new era, the United Nations must restructure and democratize itself. It is also most important that the United Nations give top priority to a programme of action on development that could serve as a framework for promoting growth and economic development throughout the world. We feel that, to be effective, any programme of action on development must be action-oriented and based on a spirit of true international cooperation and interdependence; above all, it must take into account the basic legitimate interests of developing countries, especially the least developed among them.

The President *(interpretation from Arabic):* I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Albania, His Excellency Mr. Alfred Serreqi.

Mr. Serreqi (Albania): Allow me at the outset to congratulate Mr. Essy on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session and to wish him every success in discharging this noble duty.

A well-deserved word of appreciation is due to his predecessor, Ambassador Insanally, for the remarkable competence and skill he displayed as President at the last session.

We highly esteem the Secretary-General's unreserved commitment, at the head of the world

Organization, to make broad reforms in it and to increase its effectiveness in all fields.

After the fall of the iron curtain in Europe, Albania joined the family of democratic nations, leaving behind a deep isolation and a totalitarian regime. In two years, thanks to the determination of the democratic Government to carry out profound and urgent reforms, Albania has taken important steps in all fields. State institutions have been transformed, drawing upon the positive experience of developed States. The former secret service was dissolved and the army was placed under civilian control and underwent reform in compliance with the requirements of a demilitarized, profoundly democratic society. Today, Albania boasts an independent judiciary and a constitutional court which supervises the constitutional character of the laws passed by Parliament. Currently in Albania, there are more than 30 registered political parties, hundreds of non-governmental organizations, and more than 320 magazines and newspapers, of which 90 per cent are privately owned. At present, Albania's religious communities practise their own beliefs in exemplary harmony and tolerance, according to the centuries-old traditions of my country.

By promoting democracy and strengthening the institutions of the rule of law, the democratic Government seeks to guarantee the country's internal social and political stability. However, Albania continues to be the poorest country of the European continent and faces a series of economic difficulties. By firmly pursuing the economic policy of shock therapy, in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund and the international community, the Government is implementing a series of short- and medium-term programmes that have given a great impetus to free individual initiative. In two years' time, agriculture, land, apartments, transport, services, trade and about 2,500 small and medium-sized enterprises have been privatized. From 400 per cent, the inflation rate has dropped to less than 30 per cent a year; the currency is stable and practically convertible; and production is on the rise. In 1993, Albania recorded growth rate of 11 per cent, the highest in Europe. Foreign investments are also increasing.

In the coming months we shall move ahead without losing time. The nearest objectives in legislation are the approval of the new penal code, the penal procedure code and the constitution, which will meet most advanced European standards. We will also try to increase cooperation with various international organizations, particularly with the agencies of the United Nations system.

Albania attaches special importance to strengthening friendly relations and cooperation with the international community, the European Union, the United States of America, the countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other friendly countries in the world. Albania's President Berisha is resolutely devoted to the establishment and strengthening of these ties in order to do away, once and for all, with the bitter consequences of the severe 50-year isolation which our people suffered. We want to have friendly relations, especially with our neighbours, and we are making efforts so that a climate of good understanding and cooperation, based on mutual respect and benefit in the spirit of the basic principles of the Helsinki Final Act, will prevail all around us. We have established such relations with Italy and are on the way to their further and all-round development.

We would also like to have on a consistent basis the sort of good, tension-free relations we are currently enjoying with Greece, the only country of the Balkans that is a member of the European Union. We regard these relations, not merely as bilateral, but also as closely linked to the prospect of the integration of Albania and the Balkans into Europe. Advances are being made in the relations of good-neighbourliness and broad cooperation with Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania, on the basis of a long historical tradition.

As regards the new Balkan State, our eastern neighbour, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, we are resolutely committed to building relations of exemplary neighbourliness with it and to helping that country overcome its internal and external difficulties. We are convinced that its integrity, its internal stability, its recognition and its membership in all international forums are of vital importance for peace, security and stability in the region. Our indispensable good relations with Macedonia are linked to and conditioned by the presence of an Albanian population that ranks second in size to Macedonians. We think that sound interethnic understanding between Macedonians and Albanians, established on the basis of the due recognition of the Albanians' human and national rights, is indispensable for the domestic stability and prosperity of that Republic and the entire region.

We would like to have peace, good-neighbourliness and fruitful cooperation with Montenegro and Serbia, but these relations will remain frozen and mortgaged to the overall solution of the Yugoslav crisis, especially the political settlement of the Kosovo issue. The Kosovo issue is not merely and solely a question of respect for

the human rights of the two million Albanian people and the recognition of a few rights in the areas of education and culture. The question concerns recognition of the political self-governing entity of the Albanians, for which the population of Kosovo has cast its vote in a democratic manner.

Belgrade should seriously consider this option. We consider regional cooperation and integration an indispensable condition for our integration into Europe. We have been making continuous efforts to promote understanding with our neighbours. For the further promotion of Albania's democratic and economic changes there is a need for security and confidence in the Balkans. We hold that the developed countries could contribute with a full strategy and programme in order to encourage the radical democratic changes in the entire Balkan space, a kind of Marshall Plan designed to promote peace, democracy and modern civilization there, an economic-political programme for the all-round rehabilitation of the region.

National and ethnic problems left over from the past, backwardness in terms of economic and social development, and the new problems resulting from the change of systems make it still possible for old political mentalities to dominate the stage of inter-Balkan relations. Those mentalities are opposed to true democratic developments, even in the countries which call themselves ancient democracies.

As a Balkan country, Albania is concerned about the war and the crises that have encompassed our peninsula. We are convinced that at the foundation of the present-day Balkan crisis lies the revival of aggressive nationalism, which has unfurled the banner of territorial annexationist claims. The end of the cold war has again brought onto the scene the demons of old Balkan politics which seek a redrawing of the existing borders and the re-dismemberment of some States to the benefit of others. The Milosevic regime's opposition, through a bloody war, to the will of the peoples to break away from the former Yugoslav Federation was the first challenge to the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki Final Act, while the dismembering of Bosnia and Herzegovina was the first act carried out in the name of creating a hegemony-seeking Greater Serbia at the expense of this former republic of the Federation, a Member of the United Nations and of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

In today's Balkans the nations that consider themselves more powerful and better armed are seeking to extend their territories through force and war in order to expand their power. Expansion and aggressiveness inspire their policies towards their neighbours. National divisions, interethnic hatred or religious diversity are encouraged and artificially provoked, and they are converted into major national and international policy issues in an attempt to disguise historically unfounded territorial claims. At the foundation of what politicians today call "ethnic conflicts" in the Balkans lie the aggressive nationalism of a hegemony-seeking nation, racism and xenophobia, genocide and massive "ethnic cleansing". That is why we have often insisted that any settlement that would legalize the accomplished fact of "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia would create a dangerous precedent for new tragedies of this kind, starting in the Balkan region.

Today, Serb and Greek nationalism are seriously threatening the Balkans. Such elements consider that the collapse of Communist dictatorships in the Balkans created a vacuum to be exploited to achieve their nationalist ambitions.

Hence, Serb nationalism launched an aggression in the north and a war to realize a Greater Serbia by creating a real holocaust at the end of this century against the Bosnian people and by strengthening apartheid in Kosovo. That nationalism is bogged down in grave crimes. In our judgement, only the intransigence of the international community and the refusal to recognize the violation of the principles that all of us have accepted will compel the Serbs in Belgrade, Pale and Knin to give up war as a means of solving problems. The dismemberment of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the "ethnic cleansing" on its territory are unacceptable. We have supported and still support the request of that Republic for the lifting of the arms embargo against it, an embargo which - there is no doubt - has been an encouragement to the aggressor. Similarly, we support the recent Security Council resolutions 941 (1994) and 942 (1994), which we believe are steps in the right direction for putting an end to hostilities in the region. However, we are opposed to resolution 943 (1994), which is a concession to the Milosevic regime and makes a settlement of the Yugoslav crisis and the establishment of general peace in the Balkans remote.

I would like to recall that the crisis in the former Yugoslavia started in Kosovo and that it persists there, alive and very dangerous. Sanctions against Belgrade

should not to be eased but should be further tightened and truly implemented if we want the crisis hotbeds in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the occupied territories of Croatia, Sandiak and Vojvodina, and especially in Kosovo to be eliminated. The Albanian Government insists that the lifting of sanctions against Serbia be conditioned on the settlement of the Kosovo issue.

We should be realists. It was not Milosevic's goodwill but the unanimous stand of the great Powers of the Contact Group that recently made Belgrade announce an interruption of its aid to Serbian aggression in Bosnia and accept international monitoring of that act. On this occasion we should stress that these decisions are positive and welcome. They should be irreversible steps, for we consider that the future of peace and stability in the Balkans will also depend, to a considerable extent, on a just settlement of the Kosovo issue. Albanians in Kosovo have been deprived of all rights. Serb nationalism rejects dialogue. It is brandishing weapons and engaging in threats by the use of tanks; it is organizing police terror daily from village to village, from one city quarter to another. We have insisted and still insist on carrying out a dialogue between Kosovo's legitimate institutions and its leadership, on the one hand, and Belgrade, on the other, in the presence of a third party, on the restoration of the democratic institutions that were abolished with the use of tanks and on the definition of a status that should include recognition of the right to self-determination at an opportune moment. This is the only way, in our view, to reach an overall settlement of the Balkan crisis, which may grow into conflicts far larger than previous ones unless it is tackled with proper determination and responsibility.

Greek nationalism, too, is another growing threat to Albania and the Albanians. It is seeking, through a series of manoeuvres, to block the reforms in Albania and to destabilize it in an attempt to render the settlement of the Albanian question more difficult and delay it. To facilitate the position of its ally in the north, it is making territorial claims against Albania.

Greek nationalism is dangerous not only on account of its tradition but also because of the fact that it has the privilege of being a somewhat forgotten nationalism. For, since Greece is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and of the European Union, there is a tendency to ignore it. The truth is that Greece today, as a member of NATO and the European Union, is subject to a certain control by and dependence on those organizations, and this is a positive thing. However, it is also true that over the past two years Greek nationalism has blocked action by those institutions several times because of the consensus needed to take decisions.

Today, the establishment and progressive consolidation of positions in Greek official circles is a bitter fact. The power game that is taking place in Greece is undoubtedly being played through the free vote, but, in distinction to all the other countries of Western Europe, it is being played with nationalist slogans. It is an undeniable fact that after the game is played official Greece will emerge more nationalistic than it was before. It is precisely for these reasons that Greece, the birthplace of democracy, our millenary neighbour, avoided and gave up the opportunity to serve as a promoter of the integration of the Balkan countries into Europe after the fall of the iron curtain. At the same time, through its official and unofficial policy it became a true champion of Serb nationalism - not, of course, for the sake of Serbia's interests but for the sake of interests and ambitions which it hopes to achieve by remaking the Balkans.

We do not mean that Greece can be compared to Serbia, for that would not be realistic. But what causes great concern is the progressively official character Greek nationalistic policy is assuming. It is the Greek Government which has blocked the recognition of Macedonia and has imposed a blockade on it, ignoring the fact that its border is also the border of the European Union. It is Greek state nationalism that blocks European Union aid to the poorest European country, Albania, rendering its economic growth more difficult. The Mitsotakis Government officially demanded the autonomy of "northern Epirus", as they call the south of Albania; the Papandreou Government declares that it has incorporated the south of our country in Greek defence planning. The official character the Greek Government has given to its policy on "northern Epirus" poses a serious threat to the Balkans.

Greek nationalism is trying to manipulate about 60,000 Greeks who live in the south of Albania - according to the 1989 census, they comprise 1.85 per cent of the country's population - as a means to destabilize Albania and to achieve its annexationist designs. For this purpose, Greece is emitting organized, nationalistic and fundamentalist propaganda through radio stations, air-dropped leaflets and the distribution of materials which claim the south of Albania and demand the overthrow of the democratic Tirana Government. On 10 April 1994, an armed band was sent into Albania, where it killed two Albanian army men; hundreds upon

hundreds of firearms have been smuggled into Greek minority villages and young Greek minority people have been recruited and sent to attend Greek military schools without the knowledge of the Albanian Government. The recent verdict passed by an Albanian court on five Albanian citizens of Greek origin on charges of collusion with the Greek secret services, sending out military intelligence, the distribution and illegal possession of arms and so on, was exploited as an excuse to attack the Albanian Government at all international institutions and forums, including this august Assembly, to block 35 million ecu in European Union aid to Albania, to expel in retaliation 60,000 Albanian citizens who were legally employed in Greece in a matter of a few weeks, maltreating them, beating them up and killing six of them.

I am pleased to inform the Assembly that the Greek minority of Albania did not let itself fall prey to such a chauvinistic policy. The Greek minority expressed this stand openly two weeks ago during Albanian President Sali Berisha's visit to Greek minority villages in the south of Albania. All this has arisen because ethnic minorities in Albania live in harmony with Albanians, and are not maltreated by the Government. On the contrary, with the establishment of the democratic regime, they are step by step enjoying the most advanced standards as set forth in United Nations instruments, the Copenhagen Document and other international conventions on minorities. This has been confirmed by dozens of foreign observers, ethnic minority specialists, parliamentarians, representatives of international institutions, including the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) High Commissioner for ethnic minorities, Mr. Max van der Stoel, various non-governmental organizations, journalists and so on.

With the establishment of the democratic regime in Albania, members of the Greek minority are represented in or lead local organs of power; are represented in the Albanian parliament in the ruling parties and the opposition parties, and even in a separate party; they are present at all levels of the administration as ministers, ambassadors, members of the supreme court, and so on; they go to Greece freely and with no obstacles from the Albanian State; they learn or are taught in their mother tongue, and a recent decision of the Albanian Government has created more opportunities to extend this possibility; they have their own schools at all levels, a separate branch in the Greek language at the Gjirokastra University, their own mass media, radio broadcasts and newspapers in the Greek language, as well as their political and cultural organizations.

The Albanian Government has openly declared that the crisis in its relations with Greece will in no way affect the harmonious relations between Albanians and members of the Greek minority in Albania.

On the other hand, we call on the Greek Government to apply the international conventions relating to ethnic minorities. It cannot shirk its responsibility with its senseless denial of the presence of national minorities in Greece. How could the Turkish, Macedonian and Albanian minorities vanish in Greece at a stroke? The Greek Government should put an end to the suffocating climate that prevents these minorities from asserting their own national identity.

How could the Greek Government forget the 1944-1945 massacre of the Albanian population of Chameria, when thousands upon thousands of people were stabbed to death and killed with firearms by Greek chauvinistic nationalists. And some of those who could escape alive, old folk and children, were expelled to Albania and Turkey, thus creating a real tragedy of divided families, whereas their land, homes and other property were usurped by Greek colonists, who still possess them today in contravention of international civil law.

We have always appreciated the importance of good relations with Greece, free from any concern and tension, for our development, peace and security. Because of the reasons already mentioned, this has not always worked out. We tried to overcome the present-day crisis in our relations, provoked against our interest and will, through dialogue either on a bilateral footing or through international mediation. The Greek minority people in Albania, too, have publicly supported unconditional dialogue between the two Governments. Unfortunately, the Greek side has so far rejected a meeting of our two countries' Foreign Ministers, proposed by the Albanian side, as well as the mediation of the United Nations Secretary-General, the European Union presidency and the United States Administration. On the contrary, they are still bringing pressure to bear on the democratic Albanian Government.

The Albanian Government will continue to make every effort to be constructive and strive for peace in its policy towards its Balkan neighbours, aware of the fact that the Balkans is one of the hottest and most dangerous spots in the world today, and therefore the attention of the international community should not be distracted from it.

In conclusion, I should like to stress that we share the view and join the efforts aimed at revising the Charter and structure of the United Nations, especially as it concerns such important organs as the Security Council, which takes decisions on the maintenance of international peace and security, in order to enhance their efficiency in response to today's challenges in a fast-changing world. The crisis the world is currently experiencing urgently raises the need to achieve consensus on such a restructuring of the Security Council, so as to make this important decision-making body as representative and democratic as possible and even more effective in the adoption of decisions and their implementation. I take this opportunity to reiterate the candidature of my country for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council from the Eastern European Group for the 1996-1997 term. We think that giving this seat to Albania after 40 years of membership in the United Nations would also be an encouragement to small countries to assume the responsibility incumbent upon them and commit themselves to safeguarding peace, security and world order.

We look confidently to the further enhancement of United Nations peace-keeping activities. To this end, Albania maintains that the United Nations needs an efficient mechanism to warn of conflicts in advance and to intervene in time in order to prevent their outbreak. We would like to stress the conclusion we have drawn from Bosnia's tragic experience. We seriously believe that the tragedy could have been averted if there had been serious attention by the United Nations when it recognized the secession and independence of that Republic from the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The military intervention Serbia perpetrated in order to halt more secessions from the federation would have been avoided if the new Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina had been placed under the firm protection of the United Nations.

It is never too late to draw lessons. We think that the United Nations should set up a modern system of trusteeship that could be set in motion whenever necessary to prevent human catastrophes like that in Bosnia. Today, this is dictated by the situation in Kosovo, which is very close to posing a potential threat like that posed by Bosnia; it is dictated also by the situations in Rwanda, Somalia, Haiti and other places.

As we said last year, we are in favour of United Nations intervention wherever there are clear signs, as determined by early-warning monitoring, of a threat of human catastrophe. As we all know, the consequences of such catastrophes have negative effects on regional and international peace and security. We hold that in such cases there is no reason for the Security Council to hesitate to take a decision on intervention without the prior consent of the State or Government that is the cause of and is responsible for the catastrophe. Otherwise, such human catastrophes will never be prevented, and international peace, security and stability will always be threatened. What we demand is in full compliance with the universally accepted idea, that it is easier to avoid a crisis or conflict than to try to solve it after it has broken out.

The President *(interpretation from Arabic):* Before calling on representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply, let me remind members that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Sreenivasan (India): The Foreign Minister of Pakistan will not be surprised that his statement today has forced a reply from India. For Pakistan, as would have been obvious this morning, India is an obsession. For India, Pakistan's histrionics are merely an annoying distraction. We do not want the General Assembly's trust to be abused by Pakistan as much as its patience has been, and I want therefore to place some facts on record.

First, our offer of dialogue is open, and if Pakistan responds, we will not need a third party either as broker or facilitator or umpire. Pakistan has refused to talk and is trying to create an impression that bilateralism has never worked and that a threat to regional peace is imminent. This is not true. The Simla Agreement, which has kept the peace between us for 23 years, was bilaterally negotiated. India continues to respect the letter and spirit of the Simla Agreement. Our troops are in peacetime locations. Bilaterally negotiated confidence-building measures between India and Pakistan continue in place, and neither country has had occasion in recent months or weeks to complain about their efficacy. Nothing, I repeat nothing, has happened on the international border or on the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir of late to suggest a failure of this mechanism or to give rise to any apprehension about a threat to peace.

If a threat to peace exists, it exists because of Pakistani activities and Pakistan's belligerence, as clearly manifested in the Foreign Minister's speech, and because of Pakistan's adventurism. We have no intention of

crossing the Line of Control or the international border, despite the grave provocations from across the border.

What are these provocations? The Pakistan Foreign Minister said this morning that his country did not support the terrorists militarily. The same Human Rights Watch which he quoted so selectively to criticize both the United States and India, has this to say in its report:

> "The extreme gravity of the abuses committed by militant groups in Punjab and Kashmir is in part a direct consequence of the diffusion of advanced light weapons and small arms, and the evident failure of those assisting the militants to pressure them to respect human rights. ... Pakistani support for the militants - direct support in the form of arms shipments and training ... - has greatly facilitated abuses."

Pakistan will obviously not restrain the terrorists because its Government has a systematic policy of abusing human rights. Through the constitutional and legal framework of Pakistan, state policy legitimizes intolerance. A constitutional and legal apartheid exists in Pakistan in relation to religious minorities, and even with regard to minority sects within the majority community. Several hundred thousand Pakistani citizens have languished from 1972 in refugee camps in another country, because Pakistan denies them the right of return to their own country. Nor has the Pakistani Foreign Minister told us of another group of his country's citizens who refused to enroll as voters in elections last year because they preferred to be disenfranchised rather than accept a state-given label for their faith. Nor would he care to inform us about the contents of a fact sheet published by the Pakistan Human Rights Council in Islamabad on 1 July this year about the gross human rights violations in Pakistan since the present Government came to power in October 1993.

What is true of the minorities, and particularly of women, is also true of ethnic groups in different parts of Pakistan. Pakistan is a society at war with itself.

The territorial ambitions of Pakistan in Kashmir are overt and blatant. Every Pakistani leader since 1947 has described the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir as an integral part, sometimes as the jugular vein, of Pakistan. This was true of Mohammad Ali Jinnah in 1947, and it is true of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in 1994. Pakistan deludes the world by talking about self-determination. It has incorporated without any legality that part of Jammu and Kashmir known as the Northern Areas; another part of the state illegally occupied by Pakistan is obliged by Pakistani law to proclaim its integration with Pakistan. In the Pakistani vocabulary, self-determination is apparently synonymous with predetermination as ordained by Pakistan. What Pakistan wants is to grab territory which legally and constitutionally belongs to another country.

It is this expansionist and adventurist aim which has led Pakistan, as acknowledged by a former chief of the Pakistan Air Force last August, to start three wars against India. Its armies having been beaten, Pakistan is now training and arming terrorists against India. This is amply documented by independent sources and recognized by most responsible Governments, and is frankly acknowledged even by Pakistani officials and political personalities. The Prime Minister of Pakistan immediately preceding Mrs. Bhutto stated very recently that Pakistani Government agencies had endeavoured to finance these clandestine operations by selling heroin and other narcotic drugs; this was reported in graphic detail by *The Washington Post* on 12 September.

India is a peace-loving, democratic country. Jammu and Kashmir is and shall remain an integral part of India. The people of Jammu and Kashmir are citizens of India, and they must be allowed to enjoy the same rights and privileges as other citizens of the nation without the threat of the gun. They have repeatedly exercised their franchise, and the current political process undertaken in the state is aimed at enabling the people of Jammu and Kashmir to participate in the electoral process again very shortly to choose their own representatives.

A redrawing of the constituencies and a revision of electoral rolls are under way. It is now time for those who wish to do so to use their influence and good offices to prevail upon Pakistan to terminate its support of those who seek to disrupt democracy by violence and intimidation.

We can sum up Pakistan's record in terms of its own admissions. First, Pakistan started all the three wars against India; secondly, Pakistan runs training camps for militants and terrorists on its territory; thirdly, Pakistan has used illegal trafficking in narcotics to finance arms purchases and clandestine terrorist activities directed against other countries; fourthly, Pakistan practices bigotry as State policy and has systematically discriminated against religious minorities; fifthly, Pakistan has crushed the basic rights of its ethnic groups;

and, sixthly, contrary to the protestations of its leaders past and present, Pakistan has made no effort to counter the forces of irrationality, extremism and terrorism.

This is the perspective in which Pakistan's words and actions in relation to my country have to be judged. This is the backdrop to the grim struggle in which the Government and people of India have been forced to engage to protect the territorial integrity of their country and the human rights of their citizens threatened by Pakistani-sponsored terrorists.

This struggle is not of India's choosing. It is and will always remain our desire to live in peace and good-neighbourly relations with Pakistan and to seek cooperation for the benefit of the people of our two countries. We in India close no doors. Our offer of talks with Pakistan on all subjects at any time, in India or Pakistan, at official or ministerial level, has remained unanswered for many months. We now reiterate this offer of talks. Let Pakistan answer it instead of seeking alibis.

Pakistan believes that the incessant repetition of falsehoods will turn them into truth. We know that the representative of Pakistan will again repeat his oft-repeated arguments in his reply to this statement. I assure the Assembly that we have no intention of wasting its time any more on a subject which is not relevant to it.

The President *(interpretation from Arabic):* I now call on the representative of Pakistan, who has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I ask him to comply with the provisions of General Assembly decision 34/401.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): My delegation is constrained to respond to the string of falsehoods which have been mouthed by my colleague from India.

He began his statement with the biggest falsehood, which is that Kashmir is a part of India. This is a legal fiction. In all its resolutions on this subject the Security Council has decided that the final disposition of Kashmir shall be determined by its people through a United Nations-supervised plebiscite. India has accepted this decision and is bound to comply with it. The maps of the United Nations all show Kashmir as disputed territory. In Kashmir, the oldest United Nations peace-keeping force is deployed at present along the cease-fire line.

Above all, the people of Kashmir do not consider themselves as part of India. On India's independence day, 15 August, all the houses and huts of the Kashmiris flew black flags of protest. The day before, on Pakistan's independence day, those same houses and huts flew the star and crescent of Pakistan. The people of Kashmir have spoken eloquently, as far as they can, to express their wishes about which country they wish to belong to. The Kashmiri people are part of Pakistan. They are being kept apart from us by the bullets and bayonets of India's 600,000-strong army in Kashmir. This is the largest occupation force in the world and in colonial history.

India says that it is a peace-loving country. This is very strange to hear. Let India say this to the people of Nepal, of Bhutan, of Sri Lanka, of Bangladesh, of Sind, or of its own provinces of Punjab, Assam and Tripura, where the Indian army has been involved in interventions time and time again. This country, which professes the principles of the peaceful *Ahimsä* of Mahatma Gandhi, has engaged in the largest number of conflicts of any State represented in this Hall. At any given moment, Indian armed forces are being employed in the use of massive force to repress people who have rebelled against the impositions of this country.

India has spoken about terrorism. What about Indian terrorism in Kashmir? What about an 11-year-old girl, Fatima, who was sleeping with her mother when the Indian forces entered and shot her? This is from a report of 11 September 1994 - a few days ago - in the *Toronto Star*. What about Mashrul Sultan, a chemistry-finals student in Srinagar, who was pulled off a city bus and shot, but miraculously lived? He said: "I am not a militant. I just wanted to do my studies." These are examples of countless and daily events in Kashmir today - this from the "peace-loving State", the "largest democracy in the world".

Terrorism is the use of indiscriminate force against innocent people. As my Minister has said, by that yardstick alone India is the biggest terrorist State in the world.

The representative of India has said that there is no threat to peace and security in South Asia. This is very encouraging for us to hear. On 15 August, the Prime Minister of India threatened Pakistan in a speech. Indian generals have time and time again stated that they would teach Pakistan a lesson.

Indian statesmen have advocated the use of hot pursuit across the Line of Control to strike at so-called

camps in Azad Kashmir. There are no camps. This is India's design to intimidate Pakistan. We will not be intimidated by this kind of talk.

But let the representative of India not tell us that there is no threat to peace. Almost all of the third largest army in the world is deployed against Pakistan. This is a threat to peace. They are violating the cease-fire every day across the Line of Control. Our civilians are being targeted every day.

If India wishes us to believe otherwise, let it accept the United Nations Military Observer Group on its side of the Line of Control.

India has said that it wishes to have talks in accordance with the Simla Agreement. Pakistan is also committed to dialogue in order to promote peaceful relations with India and to resolve the Kashmir dispute. But we have tried for 22 years to promote this dialogue with India, and it has resulted in a dead end.

India says it has not violated the Simla Agreement. But let me ask my colleague from India: What about Siachin? Did Indian forces not march into Siachin in violation of the Simla Agreement? And are not these forces still in the Siachin glacier, refusing to withdraw, in contravention of the Simla Agreement?

India says it desires talks. India desires talks when the General Assembly meets, when the Commission on Human Rights meets, when it is afraid that the international community will censure its violations of human rights.

India cannot talk peace with Pakistan and make war on the Kashmiri people. Let India stop making war on the Kashmiri people. We shall be ready to sit at the table with India on that day.

The meeting rose at 7.45 p.m.